



RHONDDA CYNON TAF

**CYNGOR BWRDEISTREF SIROL
RHONDDA CYNON TAF
COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**A meeting of the CABINET will be held at the Council Chamber, The Pavilions,
Cambrian Park, Clydach Vale, Tonypany, CF40 2XX
Tuesday, 17th December, 2019 at 10.30 am**

Contact: Hannah Williams - Council Business Unit (Tel No. 01443 424062)

Councillors and members of the public wishing to request the facility to address the Cabinet on any of the business as listed below, must request to do so by 5pm on the Friday, 13 December 2019 Councillors and Members of the public should stipulate if this address will be in the medium of English or Welsh.

It must be noted that the facility to address the Cabinet is at the discretion of the Chair and each request will be considered based on the agenda items being considered, the public interest/interest of the member in each matter and the demands of the business on that day. To make such a request please email:- ExecutiveandRegulatoryBusinessUnit@rctcbc.gov.uk

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

1. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

To receive disclosures of personal interest from Members in accordance with the Code of Conduct

Note:

1. Members are requested to identify the item number and subject matter that their interest relates to and signify the nature of the personal interest: and
2. Where Members withdraw from a meeting as a consequence of the disclosure of a prejudicial interest they must notify the Chairman when they leave.

2. MINUTES

To receive the minutes of the Cabinet Committee on the 21st November 2019 as an accurate record.

(Pages 5 - 12)

3. COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER - MUNI ARTS CENTRE

To receive the report of the Director, Public Health, Protection and Community Services, updating Members on progress in respect of the community asset transfer of the Muni Arts Centre by way of a leasehold transfer and to receive a presentation from Awen Cultural Trust concerning the proposed refurbishment and restoration of the building.

(Pages 13 - 18)

4. CABINET WORK PROGRAMME

To receive the report of the Service Director, Democratic Services & Communication providing Cabinet Members with an update on the proposed list of matters requiring consideration by Cabinet over the 2019-20 Municipal Year.

(Pages 19 - 58)

5. BIODIVERSITY DUTY - RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CLIMATE CHANGE CABINET STEERING GROUP

To receive the report of the Service Director, Democratic Services & Communication, which provides the Cabinet with the recommendations of the Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group, which considered a report on the progress in discharging the Council's Biodiversity Duty.

(Pages 59 - 94)

6. EMPLOYMENT STRATEGY

To receive the report of the Director, Public Health, Protection and Community Services, providing Members with an opportunity to consider the proposed Rhondda Cynon Taf Employment Strategy and Action Plan 2019-2021.

(Pages 95 - 130)

7. MAXIMISING COMMUNITY BENEFITS TRIAL

To receive the joint report of the Director, Public Health, Protection and Community Services and Director, Human and Resources providing Members with information about the work that has been undertaken on maximising Community Benefits and present the findings of a 6 month trial.

(Pages 131 - 158)

8. REVIEW OF LEARNING SUPPORT CLASS PROVISION FOR PUPILS WITH SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIOURAL DIFFICULTIES (SEBD) AND SIGNIFICANT ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS

To receive the report of the Director, Education and Inclusion Services, which provides Members with an opportunity to consider proposals for the creation of additional mainstream Learning Support Class (LSC) provision for pupils with Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (SEBD) and Welsh medium LSC provision to support pupils with significant additional learning needs within Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT).

(Pages 159 - 212)

9. DISABLED FACILITIES GRANTS (DFG) FOR MERTHYR TYDFIL COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

To receive the report of the Director, Prosperity and Development, which sets out proposals for Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council (RCT) to act as the Lead Body for the administration and monitoring of the mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) for Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council (MTCBC).

(Pages 213 - 224)

10. TO CONSIDER PASSING THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION:

“That the press and public be excluded from the meeting under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act (as amended) for the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of the exempt information as defined in paragraph 14 of Part 4 of the Schedule 12A of the Act”.

11. COUNCIL INVESTMENT INTO THE REDEVELOPMENT OF THE YMCA PONTYPRIDD

To receive the report of the Director, Prosperity and Development, which seeks a decision on whether the Council should invest and take ownership of the YMCA building.

(Pages 225 - 234)

12. URGENT ITEMS

To consider any urgent business as the Chairman feels appropriate.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. S. Jones', is written over a large, light-colored, stylized graphic element that resembles a signature or a large letter 'A'.

Service Director of Democratic Services & Communication

Circulation:-

Councillors: Councillor A Morgan (Chair)
Councillor M Webber (Vice-Chair)
Councillor R Bevan
Councillor A Crimmings
Councillor G Hopkins
Councillor M Norris
Councillor J Rosser
Councillor R Lewis
Councillor C Leyshon

Officers: Chris Bradshaw, Chief Executive
Christian Hanagan, Service Director of Democratic Services & Communication
Gio Isingrini, Group Director Community & Children's Services
Nigel Wheeler, Group Director – Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services
Paul Mee, Director, Public Health, Protection & Community Services
David Powell, Director of Corporate Estates
Richard Evans, Director of Human Resources
Simon Gale, Director of Prosperity & Development
Andy Wilkins, Director of Legal Services
Barrie Davies, Director of Finance & Digital Services
Gaynor Davies, Director of Education and Inclusion Services
Derek James, Service Director – Prosperity & Development



RHONDDA CYNON TAF

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL CABINET

Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on Thursday, 21 November 2019 at 10.30 am at the Council Chamber, The Pavilions, Cambrian Park, Clydach Vale, Tonypanyd, CF40 2XX.

County Borough Councillors - Cabinet Members in attendance:-

Councillor A Morgan (Chair)

Councillor M Webber	Councillor R Bevan
Councillor A Crimmings	Councillor G Hopkins
Councillor M Norris	Councillor J Rosser
Councillor R Lewis	Councillor C Leyshon

Officers in attendance

Mr C Bradshaw, Chief Executive
Mr C Hanagan, Service Director of Democratic Services & Communication
Mr A Wilkins, Director of Legal Services
Mr G Isingrini, Group Director Community & Children's Services
Mr N Wheeler, Group Director – Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services
Mr P Mee, Director, Public Health, Protection & Community Services
Mr R Evans, Director of Human Resources
Mr D Powell, Director of Corporate Estates
Mr S Gale, Director of Prosperity & Development
Mr B Davies, Director of Finance & Digital Services
Ms W Edwards, Service Director – Community Services
Mr. M. Phillips, Revenues Services Manager

66 Declaration of Interest

In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, the following declarations of interest were received:-

- County Borough Councillor A. Crimmings declared a personal interest in respect of Item 3 "I am a Member of the Llwydcoed Crematorium Committee"
- Mr N Wheeler, Group Director, Prosperity, Development and Frontline Services declared a personal and pecuniary interest in respect of Item 13 and left the meeting when the item discussed "I am on the Amgen Board"
- Mr B Davies, Director, Finance and Digital Services declared a personal and pecuniary interest in respect of Item 13 and left the meeting when the item was discussed "I am on the Amgen Board"

67 Minutes

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the 17th October 2019 as an accurate reflection of the meeting.

68 Direct Cremations

The Director, Public Health, Protection and Community Services provided the Cabinet with the report, which proposed that the Council pilot a reduced cremation fee for funeral directors offering direct or simplicity cremations in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

The Director spoke of the increase in funeral costs, which can be unaffordable to those on the lowest incomes and advised of the increase in demand for a more affordable “direct”, “simplicity” cremation or “cremation without ceremony”, where a funeral director arranges a service with no mourners and brings the deceased directly to the crematorium with no religious service or attendees. The Director proposed that the Council offer a 12 month pilot of a reduced fee of £560 for a direct cremation, which is comparable with other crematoria in Wales that offer this service and would provide assistance to those who struggle to meet funeral costs.

The Cabinet Member for Stronger Communities, Well-being & Cultural Services endorsed the proposal and was pleased to see that it would offer greater choice for residents and help towards tackling poverty, whilst meeting the demand for a non-traditional funeral.

The Leader and Deputy Leader spoke positive of the proposal and requested that it be clearly advertised on the Council’s website and that families are notified of the option when registering a death, to which the Director confirmed.

The Cabinet **RESOLVED**:

1. To approve a twelve month pilot of a reduced cremation fee for funeral directors offering a direct cremation service in Rhondda Cynon Taf; and
2. That the fee is set at £560 with effect from 1st December 2019.

69 Developments in the funding and delivery of Adult Community Learning

The Service Director, Community Services provided Members with information in relation to the future of Adult Community Learning.

Due to a number of significant changes to the funding and delivery of community based adult learning over the coming years, the officer advised that there was an opportunity to review the current County specific partnership model in Rhondda Cynon Taf and to explore the potential of developing a wider Cwm Taf Morgannwg Adult Community Learning Partnership with colleagues in adjoining Counties.

The Service Director explained that cross-boundary Adult Community Learning Partnerships were now the norm in Wales as they can offer significant advantages to learners and economies of scale to the organisations involved in delivery. An example given was the 5 Counties of the former Gwent have pooled all resources to a central pot and the partnership is administered by the local FE institution (Coleg Gwent).

Members were referred to Section 5 of the report, where the potential benefits and potential risks of a partnership approach were outlined for their consideration.

The Cabinet Member for Education and Inclusion Services questioned if RCT

had the capacity to take a potential partnership forward and the Service Director advised that the initial step would be thorough discussions with Merthyr Tydfil and Bridgend Councils to ensure resources can be pooled together and that there is an understanding of the challenges.

The Leader and Deputy Leader agreed that it was a great initiative but placed emphasis on the need for all the Local Authorities to show commitment and to be mindful of their capacity, before reporting back to a future meeting of the Cabinet.

The Cabinet **RESOLVED:**

1. To approve the initiation of discussions with Merthyr CBC and Bridgend CBC for the establishment of a Cwm Taf Morgannwg Adult Community Learning Partnership by September 2020.

70 Council Tax Base for 2020/21

The Head of Revenues and Benefits provided the Cabinet with the report, which formally set out the Council Tax Base for the financial year 2020/21.

The officer advised that the gross Council Tax Base calculated for 2020/21 was £79,317.31 and proposed that the collection rate continues to be estimated at 97.5%. This produces a net Council Tax Base of £77,334.38. This meant that for every £1 levied in Council Tax next year, a sum of £77,334 would be generated to meet the budget requirement of the Council.

The Leader thanked the officer for the report and commented that he hoped Community Councils and the Police and Crime Commissioner would be responsible with their rates. The Deputy Leader added that it would be discussed at the next meeting of the Community Liaison Committee.

The Cabinet **RESOLVED:**

1. That in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (Wales) Regulations 1995 as amended, the amount calculated by the Council as its net tax base for the financial year 2020/21, shall be £77,334.38; and
2. That for each defined community area of the County Borough, the 2020/21 tax base for Council Tax setting purposes, shall be as set out at Appendix 1 of the report.

71 Council Performance Report (Quarter 2)

The Director, Finance and Digital Services provided Members with an overview of the Council's performance, both from a financial and operational perspective, based on the first six months of the financial year (to the 30th September 2019).

The Director discussed in detail the Executive Summary of the report, which included financial data and progress against the Council's Corporate Plan priorities. The Director spoke of the recent announcement from Welsh Government that additional one-off funding would be made available for the preparations for winter and new emergency care measures across the health and social care system. It was explained that once confirmed, the specific impact for Rhondda Cynon Taf would be

incorporated into future Performance Reports.

The Cabinet Member, Corporate Services spoke positive of the report and in particular, the £152.226M Capital investment, which included 21st Century Schools, highways, Community Hubs, agile working, town centre regeneration scheme, extra care, leisure and parks. The Member was also pleased to note that the sickness absence rate was lower than that of the same time in the previous year.

The Deputy Leader echoed the Cabinet Member's comments and stated that the level of investment was down to robust financial management. The Deputy Leader spoke on behalf of the community about the investment in the local play areas with the Leader commenting that 112 play areas within RCT had been subject to investment.

The Leader spoke of the projected overspend of 1.67M in the quarter and the pressures within Social Care across Wales. The Leader advised that Local Authorities continued to lobby Welsh Government for funding to alleviate the growing pressures.

The Cabinet **RESOLVED**:

Revenue

1. To note and agree the General Fund revenue position of the Council as at the 30th September 2019 (Section 2 of the Executive Summary) and note that the allocation of additional one-off Welsh Government funding to support preparations for winter and new emergency care measures across the health and social care system will be incorporated into Performance Reports later in the year.
2. To approve the virements listed in Sections 2a - e of the Executive Summary that exceed the £0.100M threshold as per the Council's Financial Procedure Rules.

Capital

3. To note the capital outturn position of the Council as at 30th September 2019 (Sections 3a – e of the Executive Summary).
4. Note the details of the Treasury Management Prudential Indicators as at the 30th September 2019 (Section 3f of the Executive Summary).

Corporate Plan Priorities

5. To note the quarter 2 position regarding progress made against the agreed Corporate Plan priorities (Sections 5 a – d of the Executive Summary), Other National Measures (Section 5e of the Executive Summary) and comparison of 2019/20 targets set against prior year and 'All Wales Average' performance information (Section 5f of the Executive Summary).

72 Council Tax Premiums - Long Term Empty Properties and Second Homes

The Director, Finance and Digital Services provided the Cabinet with information

concerning the discretionary powers that the Council has to charge higher amounts of Council Tax (a premium) on certain properties provided for by the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 and requested that they consider a formal period of consultation on a proposal to introduce a premium.

The Director informed the Cabinet that despite the removal of a 50% discount in the council tax in April 2018, there remained over 2,000 long-term empty properties across Rhondda Cynon Taf, with 40% owned by people living outside of the Borough. It was proposed that a Council Tax Premium is introduced on long-term empty properties at 50% for those which have been empty for up to 5 years. The level of premium would then increase to 100% for those properties which have been empty for more than 5 years.

The Cabinet Member for Corporate Services spoke positive of the proposal, commenting that a premium on the council tax bill would hopefully encourage more property owners to bring their empty homes back into use.

The Deputy Leader was encouraged by the proposal and sought assurance that officers would hold a robust and broad engagement process.

The Cabinet **RESOLVED:**

1. To note the details of the discretionary powers relating to Council Tax Premiums as outlined in this report;
2. To initiate a consultation exercise on the proposed use of these powers in respect of empty properties as set out in Section 9 of the report; and
3. That a report, including the results of the consultation exercise, be presented to full Council to consider and determine the proposed way forward.

73 Supporting Town and Retail Businesses in Rhondda Cynon Taf - Local Business Rate Reduction Scheme

The Director, Finance and Digital Services provided Members with details of a proposed new Business Rate Reduction Scheme, which would provide town centre and retail businesses with help towards their business rates liability during the financial year 2020/21.

The Director spoke of the Welsh Government (WG) High Street and Retail Rates Relief Scheme (HSRR) for 2019/20, which increased the level of relief available to qualifying businesses to £2,500 (subject to state aid limits) for all occupied retail properties with a rateable value of £50,000 or less. In order to support the town centre and retail businesses further for 2020/21, the officer proposed that a further local discretionary relief be provided in addition to the WG HSRR of up to a maximum of £300 per qualifying business.

The Cabinet Member for Corporate Services welcomed the proposal, commenting that the additional support would help small businesses thrive and maintain vibrant town centres.

The Leader praised the proposal and stated that Rhondda Cynon Taf would be the only Local Authority in Wales to provide the additional support for small businesses. The Leader hoped that Welsh Government would continue the level of relief available in their future budget.

The Cabinet **RESOLVED:**

1. That a consultation exercise be undertaken on the proposed scheme; and
2. To receive a further report outlining the results of the consultation exercise in order to determine whether and if so how to proceed with the scheme.

74 Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) - Use of RIPA in 2018-19 by Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council

The Director, Legal Services provided Members with an annual update on the Council's use of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (as amended) ('RIPA') for the period 1st April 2018 – 31st March 2019 and confirmed that it had been used in a consistent and appropriate manner with the two corporate policies. Members were given assurance that the policies are kept under constant review and any changes required would be reported to Cabinet at the appropriate time.

The Deputy Leader thanked the Director for the update and stressed the importance and effectiveness of RIPA.

1. To note the contents of the report; and
2. To acknowledge that RIPA has been used in an appropriate manner that is consistent with the Council's RIPA policies during the period 1st April 2018 – 31st March 2019.

75 The impact of the Public Service Vehicle Accessibility Regulations 2000 on charging for spare seats on mainstream school / college transport

Following an announcement from the Leader, that further information had been received from Welsh Government about a potential extension of time for the implementation of the Public Service Vehicles Accessibility Regulations 2000 (PSVAR), Members **RESOLVED:**

1. To defer the consideration of the item until the New Year.

76 Welsh Language Steering Group Recommendations - List of Standardised Welsh Place-Names

The Service Director, Democratic Services and Communication provided the Cabinet with the recommendations of the Welsh Language Cabinet Steering Group, which considered a report of the Welsh Language Commissioner's revised recommendations for their List of Standardised Welsh Place-names.

The Service Director advised that during consideration of the report at the Welsh Language Cabinet Steering Group meeting, Members were unanimous in their feelings towards adopting any of the recommended changes to the place names within RCT and remained of the view that any proposed changes should be consulted upon with the Local Member and community prior to implementation. Therefore, the Steering Group agreed to recommend that Cabinet refuse to adopt the List of Welsh Place-names as applicable to Rhondda Cynon Taf.

The Service Director drew Members' attention to section 7 of the report and explained although the Steering Group had due regard to compliance with the Welsh Language Standards when formulating the recommendations made to Cabinet, as with any decision taken by the Council, the Commissioner may

determine to review compliance with those standards in line with its regulatory powers.

The Leader and Deputy Leader both spoke of the Commissioner's List and conveyed their disappointment that it was not subject to public consultation prior to its publication. Having due regard to the legal advice provided, Members agreed to approve the implementation of the List of Welsh Place-names as applicable to Rhondda Cynon Taf in part excluding the four significant changes relating to Treorchy, Rhydyfelin, Llanwono and Treforest, as recommended by officers in the report considered by the Steering Group.

Cabinet Member for Adult Community Services & Welsh Language and Chair of the Welsh Language Cabinet Steering Group advised that he would write to both the Welsh Language Commissioner and Welsh Government Minister on behalf of the Council to express the concerns of Members detailed above.

It was **RESOLVED:**

1. To note the content of the report considered by the Welsh Language Cabinet Steering Group on the 9th October, 2019 and;
2. To approve the implementation of the List of Welsh Place-names as applicable to Rhondda Cynon Taf in part excluding the four significant changes relating to Treorchy, Rhydyfelin, Llanwono and Treforest.
3. That the Chair of the Welsh Language Cabinet Steering Group writes to the Welsh Language Commissioner and Welsh Government Minister to express the Local Authority's disappointment that the List was not subject to consultation prior to its publication.

77 To consider Passing the Following Resolution:

It was **RESOLVED:** "That the press and public be excluded from the meeting under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act (as amended) for the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of the exempt information as defined in paragraph XX of Part 4 of the Schedule 12A of the Act".

78 Cynon Valley Waste Disposal Company Limited and Amgen Rhondda Limited - Annual General Meeting

(Note: Having previously declared an interest (Minute No. 66), the Director, Finance and Digital Services and the Group Director, Prosperity, Development and Frontline Services left the meeting prior to this item)

The Director, Legal Services provided Members with an overview of his report which contained exempt information. Members were referred to the appendices of the report which provided the financial statements of the Companies which are to be presented to the Annual General Meetings ('AGM's') of the Cynon Valley Waste Disposal Company Limited and Amgen Rhondda Limited (the 'Companies'), to be held at 10.00 a.m. on Tuesday 3rd December 2019 at the Amgen Education Centre, Bryn Pica, Llwydcoed, Aberdare.

It was **RESOLVED:**

1. That the current intention to continue the operation of Cynon Valley Waste Disposal Company Limited and Amgen Rhondda Limited (the 'Companies') as Local Authority controlled companies into the future is confirmed;
2. Subject to the Head of Finance – Education and Financial Reporting being satisfied that there are no irregularities in the accounts of the Companies that the accounts be received on behalf of the Council;
3. That Baldwins Audit Services Limited be re-appointed as auditors to the Companies for the year ending 31st March 2020;
4. The Directorships of the Group Director – Prosperity, Development and Frontline Services and the Service Director – Finance and Improvement Services for both Companies continue;
5. To note the appointment of a Non-Executive Director to the Board of the Companies with effect from 1st November 2019;
6. That the Director of Legal Services and/or his nominee be authorised to exercise the Council's vote at the Annual General Meetings of the Companies in accordance with recommendations 2(ii) to 2(iv) above; and
7. That the Council be represented at the Companies' Annual General Meetings by a Cabinet Member.

79 Leader's Scheme of Delegation

The Service Director, Democratic Services and Communication updated Members with the changes to the Leader's Scheme of Delegation and it was **RESOLVED:**

1. To note the content of the Leader's Scheme of Delegation; and
2. To note that the Leader of the Council is able to amend the Scheme of Delegation relating to executive functions at any time during the year; and that an update of the 3A will be presented to Members at the next meeting of the Cabinet.

This meeting closed at 11.30 am

**Cllr A Morgan
Chairman.**

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

17th DECEMBER 2019

UPDATE ON THE COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER OF THE MUNI ARTS CENTRE, PONTYPRIDD

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH, PROTECTION & COMMUNITY SERVICES IN CONSULTATION WITH CLLR RHYS LEWIS, CABINET MEMBER FOR STRONGER COMMUNITIES, WELL-BEING & CULTURAL SERVICES

**Authors: Paul Mee, Director of Public Health, Protection & Community Services
Richard Hughes, Chief Executive, Awen Cultural Trust**

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to update Members on progress in respect of the community asset transfer of the Muni Arts Centre by way of a leasehold transfer and to receive a presentation from Awen Cultural Trust concerning the proposed refurbishment and restoration of the building.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- 2.1 Note the progress made with negotiations with Awen Cultural Trust to agree the terms of the lease and the necessary financial support requirements to secure a sustainable future for the Muni Arts Centre; and
- 2.2 Receive a presentation from Awen Cultural Trust and their architects, Purcell, setting out their proposals for the refurbishment and restoration of the Muni Arts Centre.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To update Members of the Cabinet on the progress being made with the community asset transfer of the Muni Arts Centre and to share proposals developed by Awen Cultural Trust for the refurbishment and restoration of the Muni Arts Centre.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 On 18th June 2019, Members of the Cabinet determined to take forward a tenancy with Awen Cultural Trust following consideration of the summary and assessment of the business plans received in respect of the asset transfer of the Muni Arts Centre.
- 4.2 Detailed negotiations have since been held between the Council and Awen Cultural Trust to develop a capital scheme of works, agree terms of the lease and the necessary financial support required to secure a sustainable future for the Muni Arts Centre.
- 4.3 The initial priority has been to agree the scope and extent of refurbishment works required to re-open the building. Awen Cultural Trust have prepared a baseline proposal for the capital development of the building to ensure that on its re-opening, the Muni is safe and meets the expectations of users as a venue for Pontypridd and the surrounding area.
- 4.4 Following discussions with the Council, it was determined that a more ambitious scheme including a refurbishment and reimagining of the Muni would be produced. Awen engaged Purcell, a renowned architectural practice specialising in bringing new life to heritage buildings to develop this vision and produce outline plans and costs which will assist the Council and Awen in developing grant applications to secure the funding necessary for a longer term, more ambitious project.
- 4.5 In the meantime it is proposed to undertake the necessary works required to re-open the Muni Arts Centre in June of 2020, subject to completion of the necessary works. This will include works to secure the basic fabric of the building to enable the Council to lease the building to Awen in a good condition. In addition, investment will be required to improve the operational aspects of the Muni as a music and theatre venue. Work is currently underway to finalise and agree these short term requirements.
- 4.6 If Members are supportive of the longer term and more ambitious proposal for the refurbishment and restoration of the Muni Arts Centre, the Council and Awen will work together to secure the additional funding to support the longer term vision which, subject to funding, is likely to be realised within two to three years.
- 4.7 Representatives of both Awen Cultural Trust and Purcell will be in attendance at the meeting to present their proposals to the Cabinet.

5. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no equality or diversity issues arising from this proposal.

6. CONSULTATION / INVOLVEMENT

- 6.1 There are no consultation implications arising from this report. However, it is anticipated that should members be supportive of the ambitious, longer term proposals for the restoration of the Muni Arts Centre when the facility re-opens it will be on the basis that Awen and the Council are working towards a longer term vision, the details of which will be the subject of open consultation and engagement with the local community.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

- 7.1 The longer term proposals that are to be presented to Cabinet today are estimated to cost in the region of £4.5 million. It will however be necessary to undertake further detailed investigative work at the building to develop more detailed schedules of work to refine and confirm this estimate.
- 7.2 The Council and Awen are currently working together to determine the short term capital requirements to re-open the Muni in June 2020. It is anticipated that these requirements, once identified, will be included in the Council's future capital investment programme.
- 7.3 In addition, the Council recognises that in the short term it will be necessary to provide a degree of revenue support to Awen to support the operation of the facility pending the more ambitious refurbishment proposals. These requirements were detailed in the original business case but will be reviewed in light of recent developments.
- 7.4 At the meeting of Cabinet on 18th June 2019, Members determined to authorise Officers to enter into detailed negotiations with Awen Cultural Trust to agree the terms of the lease and necessary financial support requirements to secure a sustainable future for the Muni Arts Centre. Subject to agreement of suitable terms, Cabinet authorised the Director of Public Health, Protection & Community Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Stronger Communities, Well-being and Cultural Services to make the necessary arrangements to transfer the Muni Arts Centre to Awen Cultural Trust

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 8.1 Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 enables Local Authorities to dispose of land or buildings where there is consideration of "best value", unless the disposal is likely to achieve any one or more of the

following objectives; the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental wellbeing of their area.

9. LINKS TO THE CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT.

9.1 The proposed leasehold transfer of the Muni Arts Centre will support the Council's Corporate Plan "The Way Ahead" (2016-2020), priorities of "creating neighbourhoods where people are proud to live and work".

9.2 Along with other public bodies across Wales, the Council is subject to the statutory requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, which sets a common vision for the long-term well-being of people and communities through seven national well-being goals and provides a framework for public services to work differently through five sustainable development principles.

9.3 The principles include: thinking about the long-term impact of our actions; seeking to prevent issues from occurring in the first place or from worsening; involving people and communities in decisions made that affect them; working together with other organisations and integrating our work to understand the 'knock-on' effects of what we do.

9.4 The Corporate Plan also contains principles that include 'helping people and communities to help themselves' stating that:

"(The Council) believes that if you give power to local people you get better results and achieve better value...(the Council) wants to work more closely with RCT's community and voluntary sector to stimulate innovation and encourage communities to step forward and take on new roles in providing local services and solutions."

9.5 The Council is approaching this principle in different ways and has developed *RCT Together* as a means of engaging and involving residents in how services are best sustained in communities:

"The Council's vision is to develop a new relationship with residents that enable them to be independent and resilient and to take on greater responsibility for their local communities. This is not about the Council shifting its responsibility – it is about recognising that residents want to be more involved in what happens in their community".

9.6 The refurbishment of the Muni Arts Centre will contribute towards many of the Well-being Goals set out in the Well-being of Future Generations Act, in particular; a prosperous Wales, a Wales of cohesive communities and a Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language. In addition,

the proposals are consistent with the five ways of working in that the Council is working in collaboration to secure the long term future of arts and culture in Pontypridd and Rhondda Cynon Taf.

10. CONCLUSION

- 10.1 To secure the long term sustainable future of the Muni Arts Centre, an ambitious set of proposals for the refurbishment and restoration of the building have been proposed by Awen Cultural Trust. These proposals take advantage of the original neo-gothic architecture of this valued Grade II listed building whilst reconfiguring and enhancing the facility to create a first class arts and entertainment venue for the residents of Rhondda Cynon Taf and wider region.

Other Information:-

Relevant Scrutiny Committee

Public Service Delivery, Communities and Prosperity Committee



LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

17th DECEMBER 2019

REPORT OF DIRECTOR PUBLIC HEALTH, PROTECTION & COMMUNITY SERVICES IN DISCUSSION WITH CLLR RHYS LEWIS, CABINET MEMBER FOR STRONGER COMMUNITIES, WELL-BEING AND CULTURAL SERVICES

UPDATE ON THE COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER OF THE MUNI ARTS CENTRE, PONTYPRIDD

Background Papers

- Medium Term Service Planning; Cabinet – 14th May 2014
- Providing Opportunities for Others to Operate Council Services and Assets; Cabinet – 30th October 2014
- RCT Together Process – Update on Progress; Cabinet – 19th May 2016
- RCT Together – Review of the Community Asset Transfer Process: Cabinet – 21st November 2018
- Proposals for the Community Asset Transfer of the Muni Arts Centre, Pontypridd – Cabinet – 18th June 2019

Officer to contact:

Paul Mee, Director for Public Health, Protection & Community Services

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

17TH DECEMBER 2019

CABINET WORK PROGRAMME: 2019- 2020 MUNICIPAL YEAR.

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, DEMOCRATIC SERVICES & COMMUNICATION IN DISCUSSION WITH THE LEADER AND DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL.

Author: Hannah Williams, Democratic Services (01443 424062)

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To present, for Cabinet Members' comment and approval, an update on the Cabinet Work Programme on the proposed list of matters requiring consideration by Cabinet over the 2019-2020 Municipal Year. The Work Programme will guide and direct the activities of other arms of the Council, as well as the Cabinet itself.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Cabinet approve the Work Programme for the 2019-2020 Municipal Year (with appropriate amendment where necessary) and receive a further update on a 3 monthly basis.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 In accordance with paragraph 12.1 (Part 4) of the Council's Constitution, the Cabinet Work Programme should be prepared to cover a period of three months, with an updated version provided at the end of this period.
- 3.2 Following the amendments to the Leaders Scheme of Delegation at the Council AGM on the 25th May, 2016 it was agreed that going forward a detailed Cabinet Work Programme be published for a 6 month period, allowing sufficient notice and opportunity for consultation and / or pre scrutiny.
- 3.3 The updated Work Programme is attached to this report for Members' consideration and covers the 2019-2020 Municipal Year.
- 3.4 For ease of reference the work programme will also be available on the main Cabinet webpage for Members and members of the public information.

4. CABINET REPORTS

- 4.1 The proposed work programme is a rolling work programme for the 2019 - 2020 Municipal Year, which is reported to Cabinet on a 3 month cycle to allow for regular updates and amendments.
- 4.2 An updated work programme is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.
- 4.3 During the period outlined, the Work Programme may be subject to further change to take into account any additional/deletion reports, including any new consultative documents or legislative initiatives from the Welsh Government, which require urgent attention.
- 4.4 In accordance with paragraph 2.5 (Part 4) of the Council's Constitution, any Member of the Council may also request the Leader to put an item on the agenda of a Cabinet meeting. There is also the ability for a resolution to be made by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee or the full Council that an item be considered by the Cabinet, which could alter the forward Work Programme.
- 4.5 The 2019 - 2020 Cabinet Work Programme is published on the main Cabinet page of the Website to again assist Members of the public, by improving transparency. The Work Programme link can be accessed on the following '[Cabinet Work Programme](#)'.

5. CONSULTATION / INVOLVEMENT

- 5.1 The work programme has been compiled by members of the Senior Leadership Team in discussion with the relevant portfolio holder(s) and has been consulted upon with the relevant scrutiny committees in respect of pre-scrutiny.

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment is not needed because the contents of the report are for information purposes only.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no financial implications aligned to this report.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 8.1 The report has been prepared in accordance with paragraph 12.1 (Part 4) of the Council's Constitution.

9. LINKS TO THE COUNCILS CORPORATE PLAN / OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES.

- 9.1 The Cabinet work programme encompasses all of the Council priorities as it indicates reports coming forward across the Directorates which may impact upon the Council's corporate priorities and others. It also embraces the Future Generations Acts as all future decisions taken by the Cabinet seek to improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of the County Borough.

10. CONCLUSION

- 10.1 An updated Cabinet work programme for the 2019-2020 Municipal Year is attached.

Other Information:-

Relevant Scrutiny Committee – Overview & Scrutiny Committee

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

17TH DECEMBER 2019

CABINET WORK PROGRAMME: 2019- 2020 MUNICIPAL YEAR.

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, DEMOCRATIC SERVICES & COMMUNICATION IN DISCUSSION WITH THE LEADER AND DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL.

Item: CABINET WORK PROGRAMME: 2019- 2020 MUNICIPAL YEAR.

Background Papers

- Paragraph 12.1 (Part 4) of the Council's Constitution.

Officer to contact: Emma Wilkins, Democratic Services

Cabinet Work Programme.

Forward plan of proposed Cabinet Business for the 2019/20 Municipal Year

Specific Period: -June 2019 – May 2020.

(Summary of proposed Key Decisions coming forward for Cabinet Members consideration.)

N.B – The work programme is subject to change to take account of any additional / deletion of reports, including any new consultative documents or legislative initiatives from the Welsh Government, which require urgent attention.

Contact: Emma Wilkins (Tel No. 01443 424110)

Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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Chief Executive

Cabinet Work Programme	In line with the Council's Constitution there is a need to advise and publish the Cabinet Work Programme.	Continuous	Cabinet	Every 3 months June 19 September 19 December 19 March 20	Leader of the Council, Councillor A Morgan. Service Director, Democratic Services & Communication – C Hanagan	Open	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cabinet Members • SLT • Overview & Scrutiny
Council's Performance & Resources Report	To provide Cabinet with an overview of the Council's performance, both from a financial and operational perspective	Continuous	Cabinet	Quarter 4 – July 2019 Quarter 1 – September 2019 Quarter 2 – November 2019 Quarter 3 – March 2020	Councillor M Norris. Director of Finance & Digital Services - B Davies	Open	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report is presented to Finance & Performance Scrutiny Committee following consideration by cabinet

JUNE

Leaders Scheme of Delegation	To formally receive the Leaders Scheme of Delegation following the 2019 Council AGM	Complete	Cabinet	June 2019	Leader of the Council, Councillor A Morgan. Service Director, Democratic Services & Communication – C Hanagan	Open	Cabinet Members
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Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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The Council's Response To Net Zero - The Committee On Climate Change	To receive a report advising Members of the Council's response to the Climate Change – Net Zero Committee report.	Complete	Cabinet	June 2019	Leader of the Council, Councillor A Morgan. Chief Executive – C Bradshaw		
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JULY

Council's Corporate Performance Report	To consider the Councils Performance Report and recommend its endorsement by Council	Complete	Cabinet	July 2019	Leader of the Council, Councillor A Morgan. Chief Executive – C Bradshaw	Open	Finance & Performance Scrutiny
Corporate Asset Management Plan Interim Update	To brief members on progress with the plan		Cabinet	July 2019	Councillor M Norris. Director of Corporate Estates – D Powell	Exempt	
Medium Term Financial Plan Update	To provide Members with an update on the Medium Term Financial Plan for 2019/20 – 2022/2023	Complete	Cabinet	July 2019	Councillor M Norris. Director of Finance & Digital Services - B Davies	Open	
acquisition of Unit 1 Cambrian Industrial	To agree the acquisition		Delegated Decision	July 2019	Councillor M Norris. Director of Corporate	Exempt	

Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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Estate					Estates – D Powell		
acquisition of the lease hold interest – Oldway House, Porth	To agree the acquisition of the lease hold interest – Oldway House, Porth		Delegated Decision	July 2019	Councillor M Norris. Director of Corporate Estates – D Powell	Exempt	

SEPTEMBER

Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report	To consider the Annual report of the Corporate Parenting Board.	Draft	Cabinet	September 2019	Cllr C Leyshon Service Director, Democratic Services & Communication – C Hanagan C Hanagan		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate Parenting Board Children & Young People Scrutiny
Ombudsman Annual Report and Letter	To consider the annual report and letter of the ombudsman		Cabinet	September 2019	Deputy Leader, Councillor M Webber. Director of Legal & Services – A Wilkins		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overview & Scrutiny
Scrutiny Recommendations – Low Carbon Vehicle Scrutiny Working Group	To consider the recommendations of the Scrutiny Working Group		Cabinet	September 2019	Leader, Councillor A Morgan Service Director, Democratic Services & Communication – C Hanagan C Hanagan		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overview & Scrutiny
Council Corporate Plan - Investment Priorities	To consider the investment priorities.		Cabinet	September 2019	Leader of the Council, Councillor A Morgan. Director of Finance &		

Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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					Digital Services – B Davies		
Leaders Scheme of Delegation	To receive an update to the Leaders Scheme of Delegation following the 2019 Council AGM	Complete	Cabinet	September 2019	Leader of the Council, Councillor A Morgan. Service Director, Democratic Services & Communication – C Hanagan	Open	Cabinet Members

OCTOBER

Budget Consultation Report	To inform Members of the proposed approach to resident engagement and consultation in respect of the 2020/21 budget.		Cabinet	October 2019	Councillor M Webber Service Director, Democratic Services & Communication – C Hanagan C Hanagan	Open	
Digital Strategy Work - Update	To provide Members with an update in respect of the Digital Strategy Work Programme	Complete	Cabinet	October 2019	Councillor M Norris. Director of Finance & Digital Services – B Davies	Open	
HWB TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME	To receive details of the funding programme		Cabinet	October 2019	Councillor M Norris. Director of Finance & Digital Services – B		

Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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FUNDING					Davies		
Making A Difference: The Council's Draft Corporate Plan 2020-2024 For Consultation	To consider the draft plan prior to consultation		Cabinet	October 2019	Leader of the Council Councillor A Morgan. Chief Executive – C Bradshaw		Overview & Scrutiny
Scrutiny Recommendations – Food Register	To receive the recommendations of the scrutiny working group		Cabinet	October 2019	Councillor R Lewis Service Director, Democratic Services & Communication – C Hanagan C Hanagan		Finance & Performance Scrutiny
Scrutiny Recommendations – Recycling rates	To receive the recommendations of the scrutiny working group		Cabinet	October 2019	Councillor A Crimmings Service Director, Democratic Services & Communication – C Hanagan C Hanagan		Public Services Delivery & Prosperity Scrutiny
Leaders Scheme of Delegation	To receive an update on the Leaders Scheme of Delegation		Cabinet	October 2019	Leader of the Council, Councillor A Morgan. Service Director, Democratic Services & Communication – C Hanagan		

NOVEMBER

Cynon Valley Waste Disposal Company Limited and Amgen Rhondda	To provide Members with details of the AGM in respect of the Cynon Valley		Cabinet	November 2019	Councillor A Crimmings Director of Legal Services - A Wilkins	Exempt	
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Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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Limited – Annual General Meeting	Waste Disposal Company Ltd and Amgen Rhondda Ltd.						
Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) - Use of RIPA in 2018-19 by RCTCBC	To enable Members to review the Council's use of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 ('RIPA')		Cabinet	November 2019	Deputy Leader, Councillor M Webber. Director of Legal & Services – A Wilkins	Open	
Council Tax Base 2020/21	To receive the report in respect of setting the Council Tax Base 2020/21		Cabinet	November 2019	Leader of the Council, Councillor A Morgan. Director of Finance & Digital Services – B Davies	Open	

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DECEMBER

JANUARY

Corporate Asset Management Plan Interim Update	To brief members on progress with the plan		Cabinet	January 2020	Councillor M Norris. Director of Corporate Estates – D Powell	Exempt	
Write off of irrecoverable Debts	Need to provide Cabinet with a position statement on irrecoverable		Cabinet	January 2020	Leader of the Council, Councillor A Morgan & Councillor M Norris. Director of Finance &	Exempt	

Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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	debts				Digital Services – B Davies		
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FEBRUARY

Budget Report	The need to adopt a budget strategy to recommend to Council as the basis of the budget strategy for the financial year ending March 2021, following consideration of the consultation feedback		Cabinet	February 2020	Leader of the Council, Councillor A Morgan. Director of Finance & Digital Services – B Davies	Open	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget Consultation - Service Users, Road shows, School Budget Forum & Scrutiny.
Council Fees & Charges	The need to advise Cabinet of the proposed Council Fees and Charges for the financial year 2020/21		Cabinet	February 2020	Leader of the Council, Councillor A Morgan. Director of Finance & Digital Services – B Davies	Open	
Council's Corporate Plan.	To receive the Council's Corporate Plan 2020-2024		Cabinet	February 2020	Leader of the Council, Councillor A Morgan. Chief Executive – C Bradshaw	Open	Scrutiny
Capital Programme	To propose to Council the three year capital		Cabinet	February 2020	Leader of the Council, Councillor A Morgan. Director of Finance &	Open	

Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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	programme				Digital Services – B Davies		
General Data Protection Review Update	To receive an update in respect of the GDPR	Complete	Cabinet	February 2020	Councillor M Norris. Director of Finance & Digital Services – B Davies	Open	
NDR local relief scheme	To receive an update in respect of the NDR local relief scheme		Cabinet	February 2020	Councillor M Norris. Director of Finance & Digital Services – B Davies	Open	

MARCH

Corporate Assessment	To consider the Council's Corporate Assessment.		Cabinet	March 2020	Leader & Deputy Leader, Councillor A Morgan & M Webber. Chief Executive – C Bradshaw	Open	
Annual Equalities	To receive the report		Cabinet	March 2020	Deputy Leader,	Open	

Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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Report	of the Director, Human Resources in respect of the Annual Equalities Report.				Councillor M Webber Director, Human Resources – R Evans		
Digital Strategy 2020 - 24	To receive the Council's Digital Strategy 2020 -24		Cabinet	March 2020	Councillor M Norris. Director of Finance & Digital Services – B Davies	Open	

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APRIL

MAY

Strategic Equality Plan	To provide Members with details of the Councils Strategic Equality plan		Cabinet	May 2020	Deputy Leader, Councillor M Webber Director, Human Resources – R Evans	Open	
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ON GOING UPDATES

Brexit	To receive a verbal update in respect of Brexit		Cabinet	When appropriate	Leader of the Council, Councillor A Morgan. Chief Executive – C Bradshaw	Open	
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Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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Corporate Plan – Updates on delivery	To receive reports outlining delivery and ambition of the Corporate Plan		Cabinet	When Applicable	Leader of the Council, Councillor A Morgan & Chief Executive, C Bradshaw	Open	
Cardiff Capital Region - City Deal	The need to advise of the progress being made in respect of the City Deal		Cabinet	When Applicable	Leader of the Council, Councillor A Morgan & Chief Executive, C Bradshaw	Open	
Staff Panel Report	To receive details of the proposals put forward by the Council's Staff Panel in respect of efficiency savings and smarter ways of working		Cabinet	When Applicable	Councillor M Webber & Service Director, Democratic Services & Communication - C Hanagan	Open	
Scrutiny Recommendations	To receive recommendations coming forward following a scrutiny review.		Cabinet	Continuous	Specific to the Scrutiny Review undertaken	Open	
Strategic Partnership Opportunity	To provide Members with an update on the Partnership opportunity as and		Cabinet		Councillor M Norris, Director, Finance & Digital Services – B Davies	Exempt	

Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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	when appropriate.						
Write off of irrecoverable Debts	Need to provide Cabinet with a position statement on irrecoverable debts		Cabinet	Continuous / When Applicable	Leader of the Council, Councillor A Morgan & Councillor M Norris. Director, Finance & Digital Services – B Davies	Exempt	

Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services

JUNE

Development Plan	To consider the next steps to develop planning policy for the area/region.	Complete	Cabinet	June 2019	Councillor R Bevan Director of Prosperity & Development - S Gale	Open	
Strategic Development Plan – Cardiff Capital Region	Background to the principle of SDP including its planning status and overarching benefits for RCT and the region	Complete	Cabinet	June 2019	Councillor R Bevan Director of Prosperity & Development - S Gale	Open	
Highways Improvement Scheme	To provide Members with an update in respect of the Council's Highway Improvement Scheme	Complete	Cabinet	June 2019	Leader of the Council Councillor A Morgan. Group Director – Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services – N Wheeler		
Energy Company	To agree a flexible		Delegated	June 2019	Councillor R Bevan		

Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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Obligation (ECO 3) – Local Authority Flexible Eligibility Criteria ‘Eco Flex’	eligibility scheme		Decision		Director of Prosperity & Development - S Gale		
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JULY

Dualling A4119	To receive an update in respect of the dualling of the A4119		Cabinet	July 2019	Leader of the Council Councillor A Morgan. Group Director – Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services – N Wheeler		
Flood and Water management Act	To outline a range of discretionary services		Delegated Decision	July 2019	Deputy Leader of the Council Councillor M Webber. Group Director – Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services – N Wheeler		
WG – Foundational Economy Challenge Fund: Cwm Taf Sector Development	Agreement to submit an application to WG		Delegated Decision	July 2019	Councillor R Bevan Director of Prosperity & Development - S Gale		

AUGUST

Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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Coed Ely Development – Joint Venture and Lease agreement	To agree to the joint venture and lease agreement		Delegated Decision	August 2019	Councillor R Bevan Director of Prosperity & Development - S Gale	Exempt	
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SEPTEMBER

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Closure Of Gelli Community Recycling Centre	To receive details of the recent consultation undertaken		Cabinet	September 2019	Cllr A Crimmings Group Director – Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services – N Wheeler		
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Llanharan Bypass	To update on the current progress with the Llanharan Bypass		Cabinet	September 2019	Leader of the Council Councillor A Morgan. Group Director – Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services – N Wheeler		
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OCTOBER

Highways, Transportation And Strategic Projects - Highway Asset Investment Strategy	To provide Members with the highway asset investment strategy		Cabinet	October 2019	Leader of the Council Councillor A Morgan. Group Director – Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services – N		
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Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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					Wheeler		
Community infrastructure levy annual monitoring report	CIL regulations require a report to update Cabinet on the performance of CIL during the last year and make any amendments deemed necessary.		Cabinet	October 2019	Councillor R Bevan Director of Prosperity & Development - S Gale		Finance & Performance
Local Development Plan Review Report and the Delivery Agreement	To consider the LDP review and Delivery Agreement		Cabinet	October 2019	Councillor R Bevan Director of Prosperity & Development - S Gale		
Planning Annual Performance Report	To approve the Planning Annual Performance Report , prior to submission to Welsh Government		Delegated Decision	October 2019	Councillor R Bevan Director of Prosperity & Development - S Gale		
Local Development Plan Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)	To approve the LDP annual monitoring report, prior to submission to Welsh Government on 31st October		Delegated Decision	October 2019	Councillor R Bevan Director of Prosperity & Development - S Gale		
Affordable Warmth Strategy	The need to advise Cabinet Members of the Councils		Cabinet	October 2019	Councillor R Bevan Director of Prosperity & Development –		

Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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	Affordable Warmth Strategy				S.Gale		
Housing Strategy & Investment: RCT to lead on the Valleys Taskforce Empty Homes Scheme	To consider the proposal for RCT to lead on the scheme		Delegated Decision	October 2019	Councillor R Bevan Director of Prosperity & Development – S.Gale		

NOVEMBER

Draft National Development Framework Consultation	To make representations on behalf of the Council to the WG consultation		Delegated Decision	November 2019	Councillor R Bevan Director of Prosperity & Development – S.Gale		
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DECEMBER

Council Investment into the Redevelopment of the YMCA Pontypridd	To consider an exempt report in respect of the YMCA, Pontypridd and whether the Council should invest and take ownership of the building.		Cabinet	December 2019	Councillor R Bevan Director of Prosperity & Development – S.Gale		
Disabled Facility Grant for Merthyr	To receive information in		Cabinet	December 2019	Councillor R Bevan Director of Prosperity		

Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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	respect of a Disabled Facility Grant for Merthyr				& Development – S.Gale		
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JANUARY

Tourism Strategy	The need to propose a Tourism Strategy for public consultation		Cabinet	January 2020	Councillor R Bevan Director of Prosperity & Development – S.Gale		
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The impact of the public service vehicle accessibility regulations 2000 on charging for spare seats on mainstream school / college transport	To receive an update in respect of WG's position on Public Service Vehicles Accessibility Regulations 2000		Cabinet	January 2020	Leader of the Council Councillor A Morgan. Group Director – Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services – N Wheeler		
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FEBRUARY

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MARCH

Supplementary Capital Programme - Highways, Transportation & Strategic projects	The need to seek approval for detailed investment within the service following Council's approval of the 3 year Capital Programme.		Cabinet	March 2020	Leader of the Council, Councillor A Morgan. Group Director – Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services – N Wheeler	Open	
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Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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APRIL

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MAY

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ONGOING UPDATES

Processing Of Mixed Kerbside Recycling	To provide Members with an update in respect of the opportunities of investment into processing of Mixed Kerbside Recycling		Cabinet		Leader of the Council Councillor A Morgan. Group Director – Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services – N Wheeler	Exempt	
Highways Investment Scheme	To receive regular updates in respect of the Highways Investment Scheme		Cabinet		Leader of the Council Councillor A Morgan. Group Director – Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services – N Wheeler		

Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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Review of Mainstream School Transport Provision	Need to provide Cabinet with the outcomes of the periodic review of the Council's mainstream School Transport Provision		Cabinet	Periodic Review / when applicable	Leader of the Council, Councillor A Morgan. Group Director – Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services – N Wheeler	Open	
Porth Town Centre Strategy	To receive updates as and when applicable		Cabinet	When appropriate	Councillor R Bevan Director of Prosperity & Development - S Gale		
Taff Vale Update and Business Plan	Taff Vale Update Report.		Cabinet	When appropriate	Councillor R Bevan Director of Prosperity & Development - S Gale	Open	

Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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Scrutiny Recommendations	To receive any recommendations coming forward following a scrutiny review.		Cabinet	Continuous / When Applicable	Specific to Scrutiny Review undertaken	Open	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scrutiny
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Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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Community & Children's Services

JUNE

Cwm Taf Ageing Well in Wales Plan	To seek approval of the Cwm Taf Ageing Well in Wales Plan		Delegated Decision	June 2019	Cllr A Morgan Director, Public Health Protection & Community Services – P Mee		
Transformation of the Early Years in RCT	To undertake a focused consultation with families and local childcare providers		Delegated Decision	June 2019	Cllr R Lewis Director, Public Health Protection & Community Services – P Mee		
Community Asset Transfer – Muni Arts Centre, Pontypridd	To receive details of the Community Asset transfer – Muni Arts Centre		Cabinet	June 2019	Cllr R Lewis Director, Public Health Protection & Community Services – P Mee	Exempt	Strategic Arts & Culture Cabinet Steering Group
Local Toilet Strategy	To consider the Local Toilet strategy following the required consultation		Cabinet	June 2019	Cllr R Lewis Director, Public Health Protection & Community Services – P Mee		Public Engagement Public Service Delivery Scrutiny Committee Community Liaison Committee

Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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Extra Care Development	To consider an update in respect of Extra Care Development.		Cabinet	June 2019	Councillor G Hopkins Group Director Community & Children's Services – G Isingrini	Exempt	
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JULY

Director Social Services Annual Report (Draft)	Statutory required- Annual report on the delivery, performance, risks & planned improvements to the Social Services function of the Council	Draft	Cabinet	July 2019	Councillor G Hopkins & Councillor C Leyshon - Group Director Community & Children's Services - G Isingrini	Open	Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee
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Cwm Taf Carer's Annual Report	To approve for submission to WG the annual report.	Complete	Cabinet	July 2019	Councillor G Hopkins & Group Director Community & Children's Services - G Isingrini	Open	multi agency Cwm Taf Carers Partnership
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Cwm Taf Safeguarding Annual Plan	To receive the Cwm Taf Safeguarding Annual Plan		Cabinet	July 2019	Councillor G Hopkins, Cllr T Leyshon Group Director Community & Children's Services – G Isingrini	Open	
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Transformation of the Early Years System in RCT	To receive the report outlining the transformation of the Early Years system in RCT		Cabinet	July 2019	Councillor T Leyshon Group Director Community & Children's Services – G Isingrini		Consultation with Families and local childcare providers
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Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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Publication of 2019 Air Quality Progress Report	To publish the 2019 Air Quality Progress Report		Delegated Decision	July 2019	Cllr R Lewis Director, Public Health Protection & Community Services	Open	
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AUGUST

RCT Together – Community Asset Transfer of the former Perthcelyn Flying Start Building to ASD Rainbows	To agree the Community Asset Transfer		Delegated Decision	August 2019	Cllr R Lewis Director, Public Health Protection & Community Services		
RCT together – Community Asset Transfer – Former Bronllwyn Youth Centre to Cylch Meithrin Bronllwyn	To agree the asset transfer		Delegated Decision	August 2019	Cllr R Lewis Director, Public Health Protection & Community Services		

SEPTEMBER

Modernisation of Residential Care and Day Care for Older People	To receive the consultation responses		Cabinet	September 2019	Councillor G Hopkins and Group Director Community & Children's Services – G Isingrini		Public Consultation O&S
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Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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Guidance Policy on determining suitability of applicants to work in the Hackney Carriage / Private Hire .	To receive details of the guidance policy		Cabinet	September 2019	Cllr R Lewis Director, Public Health Protection & Community Services – P Mee		Licensing Committee
Cwm Taf Safeguarding Board Annual Report	In accordance with the SSWB Act, the need to report the Cwm Taf Safeguarding Annual Report to the Cabinet, setting out their priorities for the coming year.		Cabinet	September 2019	Councillor G Hopkins & Councillor C Leyshon Group Director Community & Children's Services – G Isingrini	Open	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cwm Taf Safeguarding Board
Social Services Annual Complaints Report	Provide Cabinet with an overview of the operation & effectiveness of the Council's Social Services complaints procedure		Cabinet	September 2019	Councillor G Hopkins Group Director Community & Children's Services – G Isingrini	Open	
The Council's Customer Feedback Scheme	To receive an overview of the Council's Customer Feedback Scheme		Cabinet	September 2019	Councillor M Webber Group Director Community & Children's Services – G Isingrini		

Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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Enhanced Discretionary Service – Home Office EU Settlement Scheme	To approve a verification service by the Registrar Service		Delegated Decision	September 2019	Cllr R Lewis Director, Public Health Protection & Community Services – P Mee		
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OCTOBER

Director Social Services Annual Report	To receive the final report of the Director, Social Services prior to its publication		Cabinet	October 2019	Councillors G Hopkins & T Leyshon. Group Director Community & Children's Services – G Isingrini	Open	Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee
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Arts & Culture	To receive an update in respect of investment in RCT		Cabinet	October 2019	Cllr R Lewis Director, Public Health Protection & Community Services – P Mee		
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Licensing Act Policy review	To receive details of the Licensing Act Policy review		Cabinet	October 2019	Cllr R Lewis Director, Public Health Protection & Community Services – P Mee		Licensing
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Adult Learning Course Fees	To consider the increase in Adult Learning Course Fees		Delegated Decision		Cllr J Rosser Director, Public Health Protection & Community Services – P Mee		
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RCT Together – Community Asset Transfer of Mountain Ash Library	To approve the transfer of Mountain Ash Library		Delegated Decision		Cllr J Rosser Director, Public Health Protection & Community Services – P Mee		
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Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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NOVEMBER

Introduction of Direct Cremations in RCT	To receive details of the proposed system		Cabinet	November 2019	Cllr R Lewis Director, Public Health Protection & Community Services – P Mee		
Developments in the funding and delivery of Adult Community Learning	To provide Members with details in relation to the future of adult community learning.		Cabinet	November 2019	Cllr J Rosser Director, Public Health Protection & Community Services – P Mee		
Funding Arrangements for Adult Community Learning	To receive details of the funding arrangements for Adult Community Learning		Cabinet	November 2019	Cllr R Lewis Director, Public Health Protection & Community Services		

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DECEMBER

Employment Strategy	To receive details of an employment strategy		Cabinet	December 2019	Cllr R Lewis Director, Public Health Protection & Community Services		Health & Well Being Scrutiny
S.6 Environment (Wales) Act - Biodiversity Duty	To report to WG on the Council's progress in respect of the Biodiversity duty by end of the year		Cabinet	December 2019	Councillor R Lewis, Director, Public Health Protection & Community Services		Climate Control Cabinet Steering Group
Maximising Community	To provide		Cabinet	December	Cllr R Lewis, Director,		

Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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Benefits Trial	Members with information about the work that has been undertaken on maximising Community Benefits and present the findings of a 6 month trial.			2019	Public Health Protection & Community Services & Director, HR		
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JANUARY

Publication of 2019 Air Quality Progress Report	To publish the 2019 Air Quality Progress Report		Delegated Decision	January 2020	Cllr R Lewis Director, Public Health Protection & Community Services	Open	
National Adoption Annual Report	To receive the National Adoption Annual Report		Cabinet	January 2020	Councillor G Hopkins, C Leyshon and Group Director Community & Children's Services – G Isingrini	Open	
Leisure Membership Fees & Options	To receive details of the Councils Membership Fees and Options		Cabinet	January 2020	Cllr A Crimmings Director, Public Health Protection & Community Services		

Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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Free Swim Programme	To discuss the potentials of a few Swim Programme		Cabinet	January 2020	CLlr A Crimmings Director, Public Health Protection & Community Services		
High Cost Placement	To receive details of High Cost Placement		Cabinet	January 2020	CLlr G Hopkins Group Director Community & Children's Services – G Isingrini		

FEBRUARY

Cwm Taf Regional Statement of Intent for Supporting Children and Young People and Families	To provide Cabinet with the Statement of Intent		Cabinet	February 2020	Councillor C Leyshon and Group Director Community & Children's Services – G Isingrini		
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MARCH

Modernisation of Residential Care and Day Care for Older People	To receive the consultation responses		Cabinet	March 2020	Councillor G Hopkins and Group Director Community & Children's Services – G Isingrini		Public Consultation O&S
The provision of Cemeteries within RCT	To receive an update in respect of the service provision		Cabinet	March 2020	CLlr R Lewis Director, Public Health Protection & Community Services – P Mee		

Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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APRIL

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MAY

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ONGOING UPDATES

SS&WB Board Development	To consider any updates as appropriate in respect of the SS&WB Board		Cabinet	Continuous / When Applicable	Councillor G Hopkins. Group Director Community & Children's Services – G Isingrini	Open	
Regional Transformation Agenda	To receive an update on the regional transformation agenda		Cabinet	When Applicable	Councillor G Hopkins and Group Director Community & Children's Services – G Isingrini		

Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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Development of Community Hubs	To consider the development of Community Hubs across the County Borough		Cabinet	Continuous / When Applicable	Councillor R Lewis Director, Public Health, Protection & Community Services	Open	
Extra Care Strategy	To receive update reports on the Councils progress in respect of delivery of the Extra Care Strategy		Cabinet	Continuous / When Applicable	Councillor G Hopkins. Group Director Community & Children's Services – G Isingrini	Open	
Advocacy	To provide Cabinet with an update in respect of advocacy		Cabinet	When Applicable	Councillor G Hopkins and Group Director Community & Children's Services – G Isingrini		
Cwm Taf MASH Annual Report	To receive the Annual report of the Cwm Taf MASH		Cabinet	When Applicable	Councillor G Hopkins. Group Director Community & Children's Services – G Isingrini	Open	
Social Services & Wellbeing Act	To provide updates as and when necessary on the Council's duties in respect of the Act		Cabinet	Continuous / When Applicable	Councillor G Hopkins. Group Director Community & Children's Services – G Isingrini	Open	
Local Air Quality Management Reports	To provide details of the Local Air Quality Management		Delegated Decision	Continuous / When Applicable	Councillor R Lewis Director, Public Health, Protection & Community	Open	

Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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	Reports				Services		
Scrutiny Recommendations	To receive any recommendations coming forward following a scrutiny review.		Cabinet	Continuous / When Applicable	Specific to Scrutiny Review undertaken	Open	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scrutiny

Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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Education & Inclusion Services

JUNE

JULY

RCT SACRE Annual Report	To receive the annual report of RCT SACRE		Cabinet	July 2019	Councillor J Rosser. Director, Education & Inclusion Services - G Davies	Open	
21 st Century Schools Programme - Proposals To Improve Education Provision In The Greater Pontypridd Area	To consider an objections report if any objections were received		Cabinet	July 2019	Councillor J Rosser & Chief Executive ; Director, Education & Inclusion Services -G Davies	Open	Cabinet Children & Young People Formal consultation

SEPTEMBER

Partnership with United World Colleges (UWC) Atlantic College	To receive a progress report on the partnership working		Cabinet	September 2019	Councillor J Rosser. Director, Education & Inclusion Services -G Davies		Cabinet – September 2018
Additional Childcare Offer Capital Grant	To advise Members of the receipt of		Cabinet	September 2019	Councillor J Rosser. Director, Education &		

Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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Funding	additional capital grants				Inclusion Services -G Davies		
School Performance (2018 – 19)	To receive details of the School Performance for 2018 - 19		Cabinet	September 2019	Councillor J Rosser & Director, Education & Inclusion Services -G Davies	Open	

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School Performance (2018 – 19)	To receive details of the School Performance for 2018 - 19		Cabinet	January 2020	Councillor J Rosser & Director, Education & Inclusion Services -G Davies	Open	
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FEBRUARY

MARCH

Childcare Sufficiency	The need to provide		Cabinet	March 2020	Councillor J Rosser.	Open	Children & Young People Scrutiny
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Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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Update - Prescrutiny	details of the Childcare Sufficiency Audit undertaken, in line with Welsh Government Requirements				Director, Education & Inclusion Services -G Davies; Childcare Officer - D Humphries		committee
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Supplementary Capital Programme – Education & Inclusion Services	The need to seek Cabinet approval for further detailed investment within the service following Council’s approval of the 3 year Capital Programme.		Cabinet	March 2020	Councillor J Rosser. Director, Education & Inclusion Services -G Davies	Open	
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MAY

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Key Decision	Brief Outline	Report Status	Decision Maker (Cabinet / Delegated Decision (DD))	Proposed Date	Cabinet Member / responsible Officer	Open / Exempt Report	Consultation to be undertaken prior to Decision being made?
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ONGOING UPDATES

Scrutiny Recommendations	To receive any recommendations coming forward following a scrutiny review.		Cabinet	Continuous / When Applicable	Specific to Scrutiny Review undertaken	Open	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scrutiny
21 st Century Schools	To receive any updates in respect of the 21 st Century Schools Programme		Cabinet	Continuous / When Applicable	Councillor J Rosser. Director, Education & Inclusion Services -G Davies	Open	

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

17TH DECEMBER 2019

CLIMATE CHANGE CABINET STEERING GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS – BIODIVERSITY DUTY

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES AND COMMUNICATION IN CONSULTATION WITH COUNCILLOR ANN CRIMMINGS, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT, LEISURE

Author: Hannah Williams – Council Business Unit (01443 424062)

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide the Cabinet with the recommendations of the Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group, which considered a report on the progress in discharging the Council's Biodiversity Duty.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- 2.1 Note the content of the report considered by the Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group on the 18th November 2019 (attached as Appendix 1) and;
- 2.2 Agree the recommendation of the Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group, which is to agree to submit the report to Welsh Government on the actions undertaken to further the 'Biodiversity Duty' by Rhondda Cynon Taf Council.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Council is required to report progress in the discharge of its biodiversity duty to Welsh Government.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The Environment (Wales) Act 2016 contains a new Biodiversity Duty (s.6) which states that public bodies, including Local Authorities:

"...must seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity in the exercise of functions in relation to Wales, and in so doing promote the resilience of ecosystems, so far as consistent with the proper exercise of those functions".

- 4.2 A report setting out proposals for the implementation of the new Biodiversity Duty in Rhondda Cynon Taf was prepared in 2017, in consultation with the Local Biodiversity Action Plan Partnership.
- 4.3 The biodiversity duty was considered by the Public Service Delivery, Communities and Prosperity Scrutiny Committee on [12th December 2017](#).
- 4.4 As part of the Council's performance management arrangements, a Service Self Evaluation (SSE) is undertaken by each Council service in the autumn to inform the Service Delivery Plans for the forthcoming year. The inclusion of a 'Biodiversity Duty' question in 2017 provided a baseline and some initial priorities for the Action Plan. The follow up question, in the Service Self Evaluation 2018, provided additional information.

5. THE CLIMATE CHANGE CABINET STEERING GROUP

- 5.1 The Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group met on the 18th November 2019 where they received a presentation, in conjunction with the report of the Director, Public Health, Protection and Community Services, which updated Members on the progress made in discharging the Council's Biodiversity Duty. Alongside Members and key officers were two external representatives from organisations, which have previously engaged with the Council in tackling the issues associated with climate change
- 5.2 The Steering Group were informed of the key areas of the local plan, which set out proposals for the implementation of the new biodiversity of Rhondda Cynon Taf and its significance on both a local and national level.
- 5.3 A robust discussion took place in respect of the importance of creating a sustainable management solution and creating a sense of ownership in local communities, with the Group agreeing that communications would play a crucial role in promoting the message to local residents.
- 5.4 Members were pleased with the work being undertaken within Rhondda Cynon Taf and were content that the action plan sought to address and monitor the key themes, which have arisen from previous work. Therefore, it was resolved to recommend to Cabinet the submission of the report to Welsh Government.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 7.1 The Council has a statutory duty to prepare a plan of action regarding the Biodiversity Duty and to report to Welsh Government, as set out in S.6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.

8. NEXT STEPS

- 8.1 Should the Cabinet agree the recommendation of the Climate Change Steering Group, the Biodiversity Duty Report will be submitted to Welsh Government and published on the Council's website.

- 8.2 'Action for Nature: the Local Biodiversity Action Plan for Rhondda Cynon Taf' is currently being reviewed by the Local Biodiversity Action Plan Partnership. The plan can be viewed at the following link:

<https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/Resident/PlanningandBuildingChange/Countryside/Biodiversity/ActionforNature.aspx>

This work will provide an opportunity for members of the public, wildlife and community organisations, and public bodies to contribute their projects and ideas for the conservation of wildlife across Rhondda Cynon Taf.

- 8.3 Additional themes or actions that may arise in the future in respect of the Council's Biodiversity Duty, will be considered by the Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group in the first instance, prior to recommendations being made for Cabinet consideration.

9. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no equality or diversity implications as a result of the recommendations set out in the report.

10. CONSULTATION / INVOLVEMENT

- 10.1 The initial input from the Local Biodiversity Action Plan Partnership, Public Service Delivery, Communities and Prosperity Scrutiny Committee and the Senior Leadership Team, together with the Service Self Evaluation process has enabled a wide range of interests and expertise to contribute to the Biodiversity Duty Action Plan and reporting process.

11. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

- 11.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report. However, financial implications may arise in association with the actions the Council undertakes to comply with the Duty and these will be considered as and when necessary.

12. LINKS TO THE CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT

- 12.1 The Biodiversity Duty contributes to a number of the Wellbeing Objectives within the Council's Corporate Plan 2016-2020.
- 12.2 Biodiversity is central to 'ecosystem resilience', which is the focus of both the Environment (Wales) Act and the Resilience Goal in the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

13. CONCLUSION

- 13.1 On the 18th November 2019, the Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group met to discuss the report on the progress in discharging the Council's Biodiversity Duty, which is a statutory duty of the Council to prepare a plan of action regarding the Biodiversity Duty and to report to Welsh Government, as set out in S.6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.
- 13.2 At the meeting, following a number of queries, Members were content that the action plan sought to address and monitor the key themes, which have arisen from previous work. Therefore, it was resolved to recommend to Cabinet the submission of the report to Welsh Government.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

17TH DECEMBER 2019

**CLIMATE CHANGE CABINET STEERING GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS –
BIODIVERSITY DUTY**

**REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES AND
COMMUNICATION IN CONSULTATION WITH COUNCILLOR ANN CRIMMINGS,
CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT, LEISURE**

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RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CLIMATE CHANGE CABINET STEERING GROUP

18TH NOVEMBER 2019

BIODIVERSITY DUTY

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR PUBLIC HEALTH, PROTECTION & COMMUNITY SERVICES IN DISCUSSION WITH THE CABINET'S CLIMATE CHANGE CHAMPION (COUNCILLOR RHYS LEWIS)

Author: Elizabeth Dean, Environment Planner

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to update Members on progress in discharging the Council's Biodiversity Duty and to seek approval to submit the required update report to Welsh Government.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Steering Group:

- 2.1 Consider the proposed report to Welsh Government on the actions undertaken to further the 'Biodiversity Duty' by Rhondda Cynon Taf Council, and
- 2.2 Subject to any amendments, recommend to Cabinet the submission of the update report to Welsh Government.

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Council is required, by the provisions of s.6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016, to report to Welsh Government on action to comply with the Biodiversity Duty, every three years, with the first report due at the end of 2019.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The Environment (Wales) Act 2016 contains a new Biodiversity Duty (s.6) which states that public bodies, including Local Authorities:

"...must seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity in the exercise of functions in relation to Wales, and in so doing promote the resilience of ecosystems, so far as consistent with the proper exercise of those functions".

4.2 The Biodiversity Duty Report

4.2.1 A report setting out proposals for the implementation of the new Biodiversity Duty in Rhondda Cynon Taf was prepared in 2017, in consultation with the Local Biodiversity Action Plan Partnership. The biodiversity duty was discussed with the Council's Senior Leadership Team in October and was considered by the Public Service Delivery, Communities and Prosperity Scrutiny Committee in December 2017.

4.2.2 The Report includes a description of the biodiversity of Rhondda Cynon Taf and its contribution to local well-being as well as its national and international value. The report then considers the main impacts of Council services on biodiversity, highlighting areas of good practice and scope for improvement under the following themes:

- public engagement,
- planning,
- estate management,
- water management,
- education,
- advice to the public,
- corporate planning,
- working with neighbours and statutory bodies

4.3 The Council's response to Net Zero – The Committee on Climate Change

4.3.1 Climate change and biodiversity are interdependent. Many of the underlying drivers of climate change also affect wildlife, for example pollution and land use change. Also, as the climate changes habitats and species need to adapt or move if they are to survive. Biodiversity makes an essential contribution to natural processes such as carbon storage in plants and the movement of water through the landscape. Biodiversity is central to 'ecosystem resilience', which is the focus of both the Environment (Wales) Act and the Resilience Goal in the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

4.3.2 Following the recommendations of the Cabinet (18/06/19), further work on biodiversity and climate change is proposed within the context of the new draft Corporate Plan. This will build on current programmes, such as the restoration of extensive peat-bogs and upland heath through planning agreements with windfarm developers. For example, the joint working with Neath Port Talbot at the Penycymoedd wind farm has recently attracted additional funding from The Heritage Lottery for the 'Lost Peatlands' project. The Healthy Hillside project is another

example of a successful project, piloted in Rhondda Cynon Taf, which may now receive additional funding from Welsh Government, allowing further sites in RCT and elsewhere to be brought into conservation management. The project, which is co-ordinated by the Wildlife Trust has been targeted at sites with a history of wild fire and involves the Council, the Fire Service, specialist organisations such as Butterfly Conservation and PONT (conservation grazing) and other landowners such as Llantrisant Town Trust.

4.3.3 The County Borough is one of the most wooded in Wales, with approximately one third of the area wooded. In recent historical terms, woodland cover has increased significantly and much of this has been through natural woodland regeneration. The County Borough has unusually high levels of urban tree cover (in gardens, parks, transport corridors etc.) at 18.5% compared with a Wales average of 16.3%. The management of much of this woodland falls within the Council's remit, providing not only carbon storage, landscape, wildlife and aesthetic benefits but also shade and shelter for residents as the climate warms and water interception and storage if rainfall increases. The impact of increased storminess due to climate breakdown is also a management consideration.

4.3.4 The important role of undisturbed soils and natural vegetation in storing carbon has been recognised by the Council. Delivering natural carbon storage solutions, such as those provided by trees, peatbogs, heathlands, dry and marshy grassland and other natural habitats across the County Borough will help to reduce the impact of greenhouse gasses and enhance air quality. Understanding and working with natural processes, including natural woodland regeneration, will help the Council to achieve both climate and biodiversity benefits through an approach which will be cost effective, sustainable and multi-outcome.

4.4 The Action Plan Spreadsheet

4.4.1 An Action Plan spreadsheet has been set up to monitor progress against the proposed actions. The actions include matters identified in the 2017 report and actions arising from the Service Self Evaluation process (see below). A number of new opportunities have also been included.

4.4.2 Members will be aware that as part of the Council's performance management arrangements a Service Self Evaluation (SSE) is undertaken by each Council service in the autumn to inform the Service Delivery Plans for the forthcoming year. The inclusion of a 'Biodiversity Duty' question in 2017 provided a baseline and some initial priorities for the Action Plan. The follow up question, in the SSE 2018, provided additional information.

4.4.3 The actions are grouped under the themes listed above. Each Action is classified as either a 'project' or 'on-going' and the lead officer identified. Columns provide for the start date, progress 17/18, progress 18/19, progress 19/20, comments and completion date to be recorded.

4.4.4 A copy of the Biodiversity Duty Action Spreadsheet (A3) is appended to this report.

4.5 Statutory Report to Welsh Government

4.5.1 Subject to members' approval, the 2017 Biodiversity Duty Report (appendix 1) and the 2019 Biodiversity Duty Action Plan Spreadsheet (appendix 2) will comprise the Council's first submission to Welsh Government with regard to the provisions of S6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.

4.6 Review of the Biodiversity Duty Report and Action Plan Spreadsheet

4.6.1 Following submission to Welsh Government, the Biodiversity Duty Report will be published on the Council's website.

'Action for Nature: the Local Biodiversity Action Plan for Rhondda Cynon Taf' is currently being reviewed by the Local Biodiversity Action Plan Partnership. The plan can be viewed at the following link:

<https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/Resident/PlanningandBuildingChange/Countryside/Biodiversity/ActionforNature.aspx>

This work will provide an opportunity for members of the public, wildlife and community organisations, and public bodies to contribute their projects and ideas for the conservation of wildlife across Rhondda Cynon Taf. Additional themes or actions that come forward, which are relevant to the Council's Biodiversity Duty, will be considered for inclusion for the next 'Biodiversity Duty' reporting round. A further report will be brought to Members in this regard.

5. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no equality or diversity implications as a result of the recommendations set out in the report.

6. CONSULTATION / INVOLVEMENT

6.1 The initial input from the Local Biodiversity Action Plan Partnership, Scrutiny Committee and the Senior Leadership Team, together with the

Service Self Evaluation process has enabled a wide range of interests and expertise to contribute to the Biodiversity Duty Action Plan and reporting process. The views of this Scrutiny Committee will inform the deliberations of Cabinet.

- 6.2 The review of the Biodiversity Duty Plan and the next three year reporting round will reflect the results of a wider public involvement in the review of *Action for Nature* described in para 4.5 above.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

- 7.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report. However, financial implications may arise in association with the actions the Council undertakes to comply with the Duty and these will be considered as and when necessary.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 8.1 The Council has a statutory duty to prepare a plan of action regarding the Biodiversity Duty and to report to Welsh Government, as set out in S.6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.

9. LINKS TO THE CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT

- 9.1 The Biodiversity Duty contributes to a number of the Wellbeing Objectives within the Council's Corporate Plan 2016-2020. In the Corporate Performance Reports, Biodiversity is a cross cutting theme. This reflects the ways of working promoted in the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

10. CONCLUSION

- 10.1 The Council is required to report progress in the discharge of its biodiversity duty to Welsh Government. The report and the action plan presented at Appendix 1 & 2 present the current position and Members are asked to consider and approve this report for submission to Welsh Government.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CLIMATE CHANGE CABINET STEERING GROUP

18TH NOVEMBER 2019

BIODIVERSITY DUTY

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR PUBLIC HEALTH, PROTECTION &
COMMUNITY SERVICES IN DISCUSSION WITH COUNCILLOR ANN
CRIMMINGS, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT, LEISURE AND &
HERITAGE SERVICES**

Background papers:

Officer to contact: Elizabeth Dean, Environment Planner

Biodiversity Duty in Rhondda Cynon Taf (2017)

1. Introduction

In March 2016 the Environment (Wales) Act came in to force. Its purpose is to secure healthy, resilient and productive ecosystems in Wales, while still meeting the challenges of creating jobs, housing and infrastructure. The Act provides a framework for a more integrated approach to managing natural resources, ensuring that long-term sustainability will be a core consideration in all decision making.

The **New Biodiversity Duty** will help reverse the decline and secure the long term resilience of biodiversity in Wales. The Act requires Welsh Government, Natural Resources Wales, and all public authorities (including Local Authorities)

“to seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity in the exercise of functions in relation to Wales, and in so doing, promote the resilience of ecosystems so far as consistent with the proper exercise of those functions”.

The Local Authority should prepare a Plan setting out what it proposes to do to comply with the new Duty. The local authority is required to report to Welsh Government on action to comply with the new Duty, every three years, with the first report due at the end of 2019.

This document sets out proposals for the implementation of the new biodiversity duty in Rhondda Cynon Taf. It includes a ‘biodiversity tour’ of Rhondda Cynon Taf, a description of the contribution of biodiversity to local well-being as well as its national and international value. This provides the context for the implementation of the Duty across all Local Authority functions. The proposals focus on the most significant areas for biodiversity impact, with scope for modification as our knowledge and understanding grows. The proposals are being developed collaboratively with stakeholders across the authority, with partners and interested members of the public. They seek to identify and build on areas of good practice, aiming for continuous improvement across all relevant Council services.

The Environment (Wales) Act 2016 is part of a suite of interrelated legislation including the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 and the Planning (Wales) Act 2015 (see Appendix One below). The Biodiversity Duty will be of relevance for the Public Service Board in the production of the Well-being Plan for Cwm Taf, contributing in particular to the goal of creating ‘A Resilient Wales’. (see <http://gov.wales/docs/desh/publications/160225-spsf-2-individual-role-en.pdf>)

Biodiversity is the variety of life on earth, and includes all species of plants and animals and the natural systems that support them

2. Biodiversity in Rhondda Cynon Taf

'The south Wales Valleys support a treasure trove of biodiversity. Like all good treasure troves it had been lost and long forgotten and has only now been re-found, and like some giant archaeological dig, one discovery has led to another; one find has spurred on the finding of the next.

Local people have started to see how their valued local patch fits into a bigger context and experts have gradually realised the significance of our biodiversity. The surprise is the greater because the Valleys have been viewed as derelict and despoiled, depressed and degraded. This is surely the last place biodiversity would thrive? However, the reality is very different. With an open mind (and a little knowledge) the secret behind the success of Valleys biodiversity is obvious. Partly as result of nutrient poor but varied soils, partly because of an intense and complex topography, geomorphology and geology, partly down to our wonderful mild wet climate, partly due to traditional small farm management and the Valleys industrial legacy, and partly due to the daily interactions of people with their environment: **all of the components for a rich biodiversity are in place**. Blessed with this heady mix of conditions and circumstances, the South Wales Valleys support a range and variety of lowland and upland habitats, which is not bettered anywhere in southern Britain. **Rhondda Cynon Taf lies at the heart of the Valleys and at the heart of this wealth of biodiversity**. This is where landscape and biodiversity come together, where the views have biodiversity substance and depth. This is no shallow and brittle postcard image based on pretence and faded reputation. This is a biodiverse landscape, which is 'breath-taking', and dynamic, and integral to a unique sense of place and belonging. To prove a point let us take a quick tour of Rhondda Cynon Taf. But where should we start?

Perhaps we should begin in the high-hedged, rhos pastures of the lower Ely and Taff Valleys, and the pastures of the Upper Cynon Valley. Here internationally important communities of purple moor-grass and rush pasture are still characteristic landscape features. These **rhos pasture** flower in summer with devil's-bit scabious, meadow thistle and heath spotted orchid and host precious colonies of marsh fritillary and small pearl-bordered fritillary butterflies. No planned landscape this, ancient field patterns are marked by even more ancient hedge-banks cut from the original 'wildwood'. Dormice find a home in the **hedgerows** of hazel, oak, ash, hawthorn, willow, blackthorn, rose, dogwood, spindle and holly, and through this network of hedgerows our remnant ancient woodlands stay connected and viable.

The valley sides of the Rhondda, Cynon and Taff illustrate biodiversity connectivity beautifully. From any bus stop in Pontypridd, or Porth, or Aberdare or Mountain Ash look up at the complex of habitats which forms the valley side **ffridd**. A complex

Biodiversity is the variety of life on earth, and includes all species of plants and animals and the natural systems that support them

mixture of acid grassland, heath, bracken, woodland, scrub and flushes runs for mile on mile along our main valleys: interconnected in an ever-changing intricate habitat mosaic. The ffridd is home to bluebells, lizards, slow worms, grayling butterflies and rare upland bumblebees. Bracken slopes with abundant dog violets are important habitat for fritillary butterflies including important dark green fritillary populations (and potentially the rare high brown fritillary). Now if you look closer you can see the signs of **colliery spoil**, small drift workings, egg shaped mounds, and, if you are lucky you'll find one of our remaining tip systems, constructions, which rival the Celtic Hill Forts of Dorset. Sites such as the Gelli Tips, Old Smokey, Wattstown and Dare Valley Tips tell an often hard and tragic story, but now support habitats of enormous biodiversity and cultural value. These are landforms of unique value and a living testimony to a sense of place, which is still strong in our mining valleys. Coal tips are proving particularly important for their lichen-heath communities in which heathland grows amongst white, encrusted mats of *cladonia* lichens. Some of the best examples of lichen-heath in Wales occur on old coal spoil tips in Rhondda Cynon Taf. Recent work has confirmed how important these tips are as invertebrate habitat: survey work on 5 RCT Tips has recorded 85 bee species (including scarce and rare species), this is half the known Welsh bee fauna and a third of the UK list.

From a coal tip, created in the 1890s, wander straight into an **ancient upland oak wood** where stunted welsh oaks cling to the valley side, with a carpeted ground flora of wimberry, heather, ferns, mosses and exposed slabs of pennant sandstone, with their lichen rich bedding planes. These sheep grazed woods are home to classic Welsh woodland songbirds: redstart, wood warbler and tree pipit. In the valleys bottoms **mixed deciduous woodlands** supports oak, ash, sycamore and wych elm with alder and willow on wetter ground. Here there is a rich understorey of hazel coppice and holly, and on the southern limestone dogwood, spindle, and field maple and even the occasional wayfaring tree. These woods have wonderful ground floras with bluebell, wood anemones, violets, sanicle, wild garlic, primroses, mochatel, twayblades and toothwort. The recovery of woodland fungi and lichen communities is testimony to the clean air. Branches, bowls and twigs are cloaked in a multitude of lichens and tree fungi: rare things like willow glove and golden-eye lichen have recently been found, rare things wait to be found: these are exciting times for our local lichenologists and mycologists.

Stand on a summer's evening in the courtyard of an ancient farm, or barn, or terraced house and count the bats tumbling out of their daytime roosts. On an autumn dawn, shiver by a disused railway tunnel or mine adit and watch for swarming bats (a prelude to hibernation) – perhaps you'll be the one to discover a major bat hibernation site. RCT supports at least 13 species of bats, including rare things like barbastelle and lesser horseshoe. On the other end of the scale, Pontypridd is known by bat surveyors as 'Pip City', an affectionate reference to the abundance of common and soprano pipistrelle bats living in the town.

Certain habitats can be 'traced back' to the retreat of the last ice sheet 8,000 years ago. Much of our **peatbog** habitat started to form at that time, as glacial lakes, hollows and upland plateaus gradually succeeded through fens, and swamp into peat. These quaking, shaking wonders are home to cranberry, sundews and bog asphodel which flower amongst the sphagnum peat-mosses and the tussocks of moor-grass and deer grass. These are places where the occasional snipe still breeds. Llantrisant Common, Hirwaun and Tonyrefail are particularly important areas for lowland bogs, with peat and pollen records which chart the changing face of vegetation over 8 millennia. History can be traced deep beneath 9 metres of peat, deep down to the remnant water of the lost glacial lake. Misused and misunderstood these lowland bogs have somehow survived and now efforts to conserve and restore them have begun. In the uplands our extensive blanket bogs were similarly treated, drained for pasture or afforested with sitka spruce. However now, where the wind turbines turn, you will also find extensive peat-bog restoration, delivered as planning permission requirements. In the years to come there is the prospect to recover hundreds of hectares of upland peat bog, swaying in the summer breeze with hundreds of thousands of cotton-grass heads, holding atmospheric carbon, and naturally storing and controlling upland storm water to provide the 'greenest of green' flood protection for the Valley communities below. You may feel a wave of hope that perhaps we do have the capacity to learn? This is wilderness, but wilderness close to home and a biodiversity, which is largely un-chartered and unknown. While you are there, make sure to dip into a forestry plantation edge where siskin and crossbill abound, club-mosses shelter, heronries sway in western hemlocks and on summer dusks, nightjars 'churr'.

In early June take the time to visit your local **species-rich grassland**, a hay meadow or cow or pony grazed pasture: in the winter it may just look like a field but in the early summer the floristic display is proof of another nationally rare habitat. We are very lucky in Rhondda Cynon Taf to still have a superb grassland heritage, which is a vibrant part of our biodiversity fabric. Pastures and road verges are places where flower rich displays of birds-foot trefoil, black knapweed, ox-eye daisy, common-spotted orchid rough hawkbit and red clover thrive: in which common blue butterflies, mother shipton moths, grasshoppers and countless bees flit, hum and buzz. The dry grasslands of the upper valleys slopes are more acidic but just as beautiful with heath bedstraw, tormentil, greater burnet, bluebell and sheep sorrel, while on the limestone there are cowslips and bee orchids. In the autumn, on a bright sunny morning visit and look for another indicator of biodiversity wealth, the reds, oranges, yellows and purples of wax cap fungi.

On a summer's day pause and cool your feet in an upland stream, or meander along the Cynon, Rhondda, Ely or Taff. **Rivers** which forty years ago were dead and lifeless and are now healthy, biodiverse watercourses, home to multitudes of stone

and mayflies, dipper, grey wagtail, brown trout and, of course, otter. All our main rivers once had floodplains. Places were winter floodwater spill, and **floodplain** grassland, woodland and wetland flourish. Pant Marsh at Talbot Green is home to species-rich grasslands and flag iris, just up the road Coedcae Marsh has sedge beds, adder, and marsh cinquefoil. The lagoons and wet pastures of Tirfounder Fields, Aberdare supports regionally important numbers of breeding and wintering water birds, grass snake and dragonflies. These stunning landscapes hold and gently release storm water, precious wildlife refuges which save our living room carpets from flood.

On a crisp winters day take in our glacial landscapes and the cwms: birthplaces of the glaciers, which gouged and ground out the valleys. Marvel at the majesty of Cwm Parc, Cwm Saebren and Cwm Dare. These most southerly **glacial cwms** in the UK are home to peregrine falcons and stranded arctic alpine plants – flowers and ferns, which cling to the coolest, shadiest ledges and wait in hope for tundra summers to return. At the head of the Rhondda Fawr stand in the terrace streets of an alpine village called Blaenrhondda and feel the presence of Pen Pych rise above. Travel up the Rhondda Fach to the scree slopes of Cefn Craig Amos and Tarren Maerdy, where from their school desks kids from Maerdy Comp compose words and pictures from the jumble of frost shattered sandstone on the hillside backdrop to their school.

Where industry has been cleared, experience some '**brownfield**' biodiversity. Post-industrial sites often support amazing mosaics of grassland, wetland and woodland habitats all naturally developed on apparently derelict land. These eclectic mixtures of habitats hold many a biodiversity surprise and a home to newts, frogs, dingy skipper butterflies and red-belted clearwing moths.

Whichever way you wandered, on the way home count the ferns in your neighbour's front wall, can you find the classic four of harts-tongue, maidenhair-spleenwort, rustyback and wall rue? Make a note to take more care when you next re-point your wall and try to encourage your own fern garden. At the gate pause and watch a leaf-cutter bees ferrying neatly rolled leaves to nest chambers in the drainage holes of your UVPC double-glazed windows. Look up, and marvel that your swifts in the loft and house martins under the eaves have come back to you from across the Sahara and far beyond, and a thousand places you'll never see. Feel equal pride that your year-round house sparrows can nest and 'chirrup' from your bird-friendly soffit boards. Also, with your trusty moth trap you can boast a list of 300 macro-moths in your terrace garden, 50 bee species (with lawn full of solitary bee mounds), twenty frogs in the pond and dozens of slow worms in the compost heap. After all, biodiversity does start at home.'

3. Biodiversity's contribution to local well-being and its national and international value

The public engagement undertaken for the Natural Resources Wales Rhondda Pilot in 2015/16 and the Well-being Assessment undertaken for Cwm Taf in 2016/17 have both highlighted the importance of the landscape and wildlife to local people. It is one of the assets which people value and it contributes to their sense of place and to local culture. The importance of 'the outdoors' for both physical and mental health was widely recognised. Some people also expressed interest in becoming more involved in looking after local green space.

Under S.7 of the Environment Act, Welsh Government publishes lists of the habitats and species of principal importance in Wales. In Rhondda Cynon Taf, most of the terrestrial habitats are represented and a large number of the species, reflecting how valuable our biodiversity is in a national and international context. Perhaps most telling is the extent of the 'priority habitats' in RCT (20% of the non forested area) and Merthyr (23%) compared with a Glamorgan figure of 16% and Wales as a whole at 18%. See appendix 2

The extent of semi-natural habitat, the diversity of habitat types and the 'connectivity' both from the lowlands to the uplands and from the south to the north are among the reasons why the valleys are so important for biodiversity in Wales.

4. Significant areas of biodiversity impact

4.1 Public engagement with biodiversity in RCT

The knowledge and understanding of local biodiversity generated by local people should not be underestimated. From the heyday of the Victorian naturalist to the present, an interest in their local environment has inspired, enthralled and entertained. It is a pastime that can provide pleasure to many, regardless of income or education. In the past, few professional ecologists visited the area compared with the national parks or the coast, little was written about the Valleys in academic journals and local knowledge remained largely untapped. Since the advent of Biodiversity Action Planning (arising from commitments at the Rio Earth Summit in 1992 and subsequent UK and Welsh Government policy) the importance of the Valleys for biodiversity has been recognised. Professional ecologists are now more engaged locally, but typically their work is task orientated such as the detailed surveys required for a proposed development site, or river sampling to assess pollution levels. This data is very useful and adds to our knowledge but it cannot replace the day to day observations, enthusiasms and expertise for both common and rare wildlife that comes from local people.

The Local Biodiversity Action Plan partnership was established in Rhondda Cynon Taf in 1997, along with similar partnerships across Wales. The partnership was set up to prepare a Local Biodiversity Action Plan for the area. Anyone with an interest in wildlife was encouraged to join, so that local knowledge and understanding would inform and shape the Plan. The Partnership continues to review, update and implement the action plan and to support, develop and celebrate local expertise.

The Council has also developed strong relationships with specialist voluntary organisations such as the Wildlife Trust, Butterfly Conservation, Glamorgan Bird Club, PONT (an organisation promoting conservation grazing) and the South East Wales Biodiversity Recording Centre (SEWBREC) who can provide specialist advice and volunteer support for joint projects.

There is potential for public engagement to be further developed both to sustain, support and develop local capacity and for local knowledge and expertise to be more widely used within the Council. For example SEWBREC currently provide information to support the Planning function, but there could be advantages for other departments as well. There is also potential to promote the wildlife value of Council owned land and explore opportunities to link local communities to local wildlife sites.

4.2 Biodiversity and the Planning System

The Local Development Plan for Rhondda Cynon Taf (2011) and the associated Supplementary Planning Guidance, for Nature Conservation and for Planning Obligations and the Community Infrastructure Levy, provides the framework for the protection and enhancement of biodiversity in the statutory land-use planning process. Nationally protected sites such as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) are underpinned by local Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) which have been identified in the Local Development Plan. Development proposals should avoid damage to the biodiversity value of these sites. To ensure decisions are soundly based, SEWBREC supply the Council with data regarding planning applications and where appropriate developers must supply adequate information about the habitats and species present on the site, the impact of their proposals and any mitigation or enhancement proposed. The Council's ecologist provides advice to the Development Management team and assists in the negotiation of S106 and similar agreements with developers to ensure the protection of biodiversity features on development sites and their long term management, typically for 25 years. For protected species, such as bats, protocols have been developed to minimise risks for both the developer and the council.

Much of the current planning work is being taken forward at a regional level. The Valleys Task force, the Cardiff City Region Deal, the strategic plan for the Cardiff region etc. will all need to address the Biodiversity Duty, as will the review of the Local Development Plan. Monitoring outcomes and collating evidence of the multiple benefits of current policies (for public open space, children's play, active travel, landscape, flood risk reduction, wildfire risk reduction, carbon and water storage as well as biodiversity) will be an important consideration.

4.3 Biodiversity and land /estate management

The Council has extensive land and property holdings across the County Borough. The portfolio includes offices, schools, roads and parks plus many amenity areas in housing developments, town centre public spaces and extensive former land reclamation sites and old railway lines. The management of this estate can make an important contribution to biodiversity. For example, the NRW 'Rhondda Pilot' in 2014-16 identified that in excess of 60% of the land in Rhondda is in public ownership (NRW and Council). There are examples of good practice in land and

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property management, for example protocols relating to essential maintenance works undertaken in the bird nesting season, the introduction of biodiversity management of road verges and the use of conservation grazing to reduce wildfire risk.

There is a need to better understand both the opportunities and the constraints for developing good practice further. Council proposals for development and protocols relating to the disposal of assets are two areas where further work is proposed.

4.4 Biodiversity and water management

The local authority has a variety of responsibilities relating to water including ordinary watercourse consents, flood risk management planning and water pollution prevention. In many of these areas Natural Resources Wales have parallel powers relating to the main rivers. The flood risk management plan for RCT has been informed by an understanding of the geology, topography, climate, biodiversity and industrial history of the County Borough. The constricted and heavily developed valley floor, the steep valley sides, the historic use of culverts where the watercourses meet the built up area and the high rainfall totals all contribute to the flood risk. Upstream management, including restoring peat-bogs on the extensive upland plateau has been identified as a potential risk reduction option. This has been taken forward in planning agreements negotiated as part of wind farm planning consents

Good practice is being developed in relation to ordinary water course consents and there is potential for closer integration with development management, for more sustainable drainage systems in new developments (SUDS) and for reducing water pollution.

4.5 Biodiversity and education

The local authority has overall responsibility for education within the County Borough, although most of the service delivery is delegated to schools. The land and buildings are subject to the same biodiversity considerations as the rest of the Council's holdings, however there will be additional opportunities for schools to develop and use their grounds for outdoor teaching and learning, including about biodiversity. A number of schools have taken advantage of the Tidy Towns initiative, where the Keep Wales Tidy community officer and a council team can assist in developing outdoor classrooms, gardens, food growing and woodland areas.

Learning outside the classroom can provide memorable experiences for pupils, spark an interest in wildlife, encourage countryside care and citizenship as well as the beneficial educational outcomes. The early years curriculum (foundation phase), promotes outdoor learning. 'Walk to the Wild' has been developed to assist schools to use wild spaces, typically in Council ownership, within walking distance of the school, for half day curriculum based outdoor learning sessions, particularly for Key Stage Two.

There is scope to develop the opportunities for schools to learn more about local wildlife, to increase outdoor learning both in school grounds and in the locality.

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There may also be opportunities to work with the youth service, libraries, informal and continuing education.

4.6 Biodiversity and advice to the public

Many Council officers provide advice to the public and some of this may create opportunities or have implications for biodiversity. Obvious examples include advice regarding invasive species or pest control where good practice has been developed. Generally speaking, where there is a good understanding of biodiversity in relation to Council policy and practice, this will feed through to public advice.

There are opportunities to develop this, for example through the Council's website. There may also be opportunities relating to advice about training and career development.

4.7 Biodiversity and corporate planning

The Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 has established a new framework for corporate planning, based on seven goals for wellbeing in Wales and five ways of working. Biodiversity is explicitly recognised as a contributing factor in creating a resilient Wales and this, combined with the new Biodiversity Duty in the Environment (Wales) Act 2016, should ensure that biodiversity is considered. A short section on biodiversity has been included in the 2016/17 Corporate Performance Report and the Biodiversity Duty requirements have been included in the 'Place' element of the refreshed Corporate Plan. The Service Self Assessment for autumn 2017 includes a section on biodiversity that will provide a baseline for reporting and inform the 2018/19 Service Delivery Plans.

The public consultation for the well-being assessment in summer 2016 identified wildlife, local landscape quality and outdoor activity as important to peoples' well-being. The environmental assessment also highlighted the importance of biodiversity as an asset for Cwm Taf. The assessment was published in March 2017 and the Wellbeing Plan will be completed by May 2018.

There are examples of good practice in Service level planning. The Local Development Plan and the Flood Risk Management Plan are examples where biodiversity has been an integral consideration. Future opportunities include emergency planning, the 21st Century schools programme and the Local Transport Plan.

4.8 Working with neighbouring authorities and other statutory bodies

Much of the work of the local authority is undertaken in partnership with neighbouring or similar authorities, or with other statutory bodies. The appropriate scale for biodiversity action can vary from very local, to regional and national. The joint working with Neath Port Talbot and Natural Resources Wales to restore peat bog and heath land on Penycymoedd wind farm is one example. The coal and mineral spoil working group (led by Merthyr Tydfil) is a broader initiative considering industrial and cultural heritage, the geology, biodiversity, landscape and amenity value of old coal spoil tips cross the Valleys area. 'Healthy Hillside' is a joint project

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between the Council, NRW, the Fire Service and the Wildlife Trust to manage the hillsides for biodiversity and reduce the risk of wildfire. Housing Associations have also developed best practice, for example in relation to bats and nesting birds in building refurbishment.

NRW is the main statutory body with biodiversity responsibilities. NRW is represented on the Public Service Board for Cwm Taf and will prepare an Area Statement to inform local decision making. NRW also has statutory responsibilities relating to the planning process, protected species, SSSIs and SACs and provides advice through the area and supports the Local Biodiversity Action Plan partnership. NRW is also a major landowner in RCT managing the public forest estate. All public bodies will be subject to the Biodiversity Duty and this, combined with the requirements of the WFG Act, may lead to new ways of working with the Council.

There is scope to develop joint working further. When resources are scarce, collaboration can help make progress that would not be possible alone.

4.9 Other aspects as identified

It is anticipated that there will be other areas of Council work with opportunities or implications for biodiversity that are revealed as discussions with stakeholders proceed. There is scope for these to be added to the continuous improvement action plan.

5. Monitoring and reporting

A spreadsheet of actions for continuous improvement is being developed to support the Biodiversity Duty. The Council is required to report to Welsh Government by December 2019, and subsequently every three years, on progress made in implementing the Duty. This report and the associated spreadsheet will provide the information to meet this requirement.

Appendix One

Legislation for sustainable development to secure the long term well-being of Wales

For Wales to develop sustainably, we need to change the law to put in place the key elements that will enable it to happen:

- A clear idea of what we are aiming for and an undertaking of the key principles that guide us;
- A clear picture of the natural resources we have, the risks they face and the opportunities they provide; and,
- An efficient process that ensures the right development is located in the right place to make it happen.



Appendix Two: S.7 Habitats and Species in RCT and Merthyr

	Rhondda	Cynon	Taf	Merthyr
Mammals				
Water Vole		√		
Barbastelle Bat			√	
Hedgehog	√	√	√	√
Brown Hare	√	√	√	√
Otter	√	√	√	√
Harvest Mouse			√	
Dormouse		(√)	√	
Pine martin		(√)		
Noctule	√	√	√	√
Common Pipistrelle	√	√	√	√
Soprano Pipistrelle	√	√	√	√
Brown Long eared bat	√	√	√	√
Greater Horseshoe Bat			√	√
Lesser Horseshoe bat	√	√	√	√
Red Squirrel				
Birds				
Skylark	√	√	√	√
Tree Pipit	√	√	√	√
Nightjar	√	√	√	√
Lesser Redpoll	√	√	√	√
Common Linnet	√	√	√	√
Ringed Plover			√	
Hen Harrier	(√)	(√)	(√)	(√)
Cuckoo	√	√	√	√
Lesser Spotted woodpecker			√	
Yellowhammer			(√)	
Reed Bunting	√	√	√	√
Kestrel	√	√	√	√
Pied Flycatcher	(√)	(√)	(√)	√
Red Grouse		(√)		(√)
Herring Gull	√	√	√	√
Black Headed Gull	√	√	√	√
Grasshopper Warbler	√	√	√	√
Spotted flycatcher	√	√	√	√
Curlew			√	
Marsh Tit			(√)	
Willow Tit		√		
House Sparrow	√	√	√	√
Wood Warbler	√	√	√	√
Golden plover	(√)		(√)	
Bullfinch	√	√	√	√
Starling	√	√	√	√
Song thrush	√	√	√	√
Ring ouzel	(√)	(√)		(√)

Lapwing	(v)	(v)	(v)	v
Fish				
Eel	v	v	v	v
River Lamprey	v	v	v	v
Atlantic Salmon	v	v	v	v
Sea/Brown Trout	v	v	v	v
Herptiles				
Slow worm	v	v	v	v
Common toad	v	v	v	v
Common lizard	v	v	v	v
Grass snake	v	v	v	v
Great crested newt	v	v	v	v
Adder	v	v	v	v
Invertebrates				
Grey Dagger	v	v	v	v
Knot Grass	v	v	v	v
Flounced Chestnut	v	v	v	v
Brown Spot Pinion		v	(v)	v
Beaded Chestnut			v	(v)
Green Brindled Crescent	v	v	v	v
Ear Moth	v	v	v	v
Mouse Moth	v	v	v	v
Anaria funebris			v	
Andrena tarsata	v	v	v	
Dusky Brocade	v	v	v	v
Garden Tiger	v	v	v	v
High Brown Fritillary	(v)		(v)	
Centre Barred Sallow	v	v	v	v
White Clawed Crayfish			(v)	(v)
Bembidion testaceum		(v)	(v)	
Dark Brocade	(v)	(v)	(v)	(v)
Small Pearl Bordered Fritillary	v	v	v	v
Bombus humilis	v	v	v	v
Bombus muscorum	(v)	(v)	(v)	(v)
Bombus rudarius			(v)	
Bombus sylvarum			(v)	
Minor Shoulder-knot		v		v
Mottled Rustic	v	v	v	v
The Crescent			v	
The Broom Tip			(v)	
Latticed Heath	v	v	v	v
Small Heath	v	v	v	v
Goat Moth	(v)	v	(v)	v
Small Blue	v	v	v	(v)

Oak Lutestring	√	√	√	√
Small Square Spot	√	√	√	√
Figure of Eight	√	√	√	√
Small Phoenix	√	√	√	√
September Thorn		√		
August Thorn	√		√	
Grey Mountain Carpet	√	√	√	√
Galium Carpet	√	√	√	√
Dingy Skipper	√	√	√	√
Long Horned Bee		(√)	√	
Autumnal Rustic	√	√	√	√
Spinach	(√)	(√)	(√)	(√)
Marsh Fritillary		√	√	√
Garden Carpet	√	√	√	√
Double Dart		√		√
Narrow Bordered Bee Hawk Moth		(√)	(√)	(√)
Small Emerald		√	√	
Ghost	√	√	√	√
Grayling	√	√	√	√
The Rustic	√	√	√	√
Rosy Rustic	√	√	√	√
Currant Shhot-borer			(√)	
Wall Brown	√	√	√	√
Lipsothrix errans				(√)
Brindled Beauty	√	√	√	√
Lackey			√	
Dot Moth	√	√	√	√
Broom Moth	√	√	√	√
Pretty Chalk Carpet			(√)	
Meloe proscarabaeus			(√)	
Meloe violaceus			(√)	
Meotica anglica			√	
Rosy Minor	√	√	√	√
Drab Looper			(√)	
Shoulder-striped Wainscot	√	√	√	√
Powdered Quaker	√	√	√	√
Potamanthus luteus			(√)	(√)
White Letter Hairstreak	√	√	√	√
Mullein	√	√	√	√
Shaded Broad-bar	√	√	√	√
White Ermine	√	√	√	√
Anomalous	√	√	√	√
Hedge Rustic	√	√	√	√
Feathered Gothic			√	
Blood Vein	√	√	√	√
Vascular Plants				

Deptford Pink			√	
Euphrasia officinalis subsp. anglica	√	√	(√)	(√)
Yellow bird's-nest			√	
Stag's-horn Clubmoss	√	√	√	√
Lesser Butterfly-orchid				(√)
Ley's Whitebeam				√
Globe-flower		√		√
Wood Bitter-Vetch		√		√
Lichens				
Caloplaca herbidella				(√)
Collema fragrans		(√)		
Toninia sedifolia		(√)		(√)
Usnea florida		(√)		(√)
Fungi				
Clavaria zollingeri	(√)	√	(√)	(√)
Cotylidia pannosa		(√)		
Entoloma bloxamii				(√)
Geoglossum atropurpureum		(√)		(√)
Hygrocybe spadicea		(√)		
Hypocreopsis rhododendri			(√)	
Microglossum olivaceum	(√)	(√)	(√)	(√)
Habitats				
Broadleaved mixed and yew woodland				
a) Traditional orchards	(√)	(√)	(√)	(√)
b) Wood pasture and parkland	√	√	√	√
c) Lowland Beech and Yew		√	√	√
d) Upland mixed ash				(√)
e) Wet Woodland	√	√	√	√
f) Lowland mixed deciduous	√	√	√	√
Boundary and Linear Hedgerows	√	√	√	√
Arable Field Margins			(√)	
Coastal and Floodplain Grassland		√	√	√
Lowland Meadows	√	√	√	√

Biodiversity is the variety of life on earth, and includes all species of plants and animals and the natural systems that support them

Lowland Calcareous Grassland			(v)	
Upland Calcareous Grassland		√		√
Lowland Dry Acid Grassland	√	√	√	√
Dwarf Shrub heath				
a) Lowland Heathland	√	√	√	√
b) Upland Heathland	√	√	√	√
Fen, Marsh and Swamp				
a) Upland flushes, fens and swamps	√	√	√	√
b) Lowland fens		√	√	
c) Purple Moorgrass and Rush pasture	√	√	√	√
d) Reedbeds		√	√	(v)
Bogs				
a) Lowland Raised Bog	(v)	√	√	√
b) Blanket Bog	√	√		
Rivers	√	√	√	√
Standing Open water and Canals				
a) Ponds	√	√	√	√
b) Mesotrophic Lakes	√	√	√	√
c) Eutrophic Standing water	√	√	√	√
Inland Rock				
a) Rock outcrops/scree	√	√	√	√
b) Open mosaic habitats on previously developed land	√	√	√	√
c) Limestone Pavement				√

Key :

√ = Definite Present

(v) = Probably/Potentially/Occasionally Present

Biodiversity is the variety of life on earth, and includes all species of plants and animals and the natural systems that support them

2019/20 Biodiversity Duty: Action spreadsheet		main contact	on-going or project	started	progress 2017/18	progress 2018/19	progress 2019/20	comments	completed
1. Public engagement with biodiversity in RCT									
1.1	LBAP partnership	Richard Wistow	on-going	1997	meetings held in April, July and Sept 2017 and Jan 2018	meetings held April, July, Oct 18, Jan 19. 10 year review of Action for Nature commenced Jan 19	meetings held April, July, planned for Oct 3rd. Slow progress with LBAP review due to delay in WG funding.	timetable for the review of the LBAP considered at J19 meeting, progress report to Ap and Jul19, engagement events summer 19.	
1.2	Recorders' Newsletter	Richard Wistow	on-going	1997	Recorders' Newsletter no 37b published	delayed due to other work pressures	summary for 2018 produced and distributed Sept 19		
1.3	council sites and community groups	Liz Dean/ Richard Wistow	on going	1997	Welcome to our Woods meetings and supporting action, SEWBRC bio-blitz at Maerdy Colliery in July. Use of Key Countryside sites by various groups including Coed Lleol	Welcome to our Woods meetings and supporting action, liasion with Wildlife Trust re community engagement at Llanharan quarry.	Pontyclun wildflower walk, Beddau Biodiversity Ramble, Aberdare Park moth and bat events, Dare Valley Country Park bird and student events, monthly summer childrens events at Dare Valley and Ynysangharad Park (Magnificent minibeasts, muddy masterpieces, beautiful butterflies, den building)	As part of partnership working in 2019/20 further discussions held with the Wildlife trust for South and West Wales to explore potential community engagement work on RCT 'Countryside' sites. The hope is to try to develop a initial programme for work on pilot sites in 2020/21	
2. Biodiversity and the Planning System									
2.1	implement current policy and guidance	Richard Wistow	on-going	2011	An ecological review has been undertaken for at least 1184 planning applications received by the Local Planning Authority, including the review of SewBrec data searches	An ecological review has been undertaken for at least 724 planning applications received by the Local Planning authority, including the review of SewBrec data searches	Up to September 2019 an ecological review has been undertaken for at least 396 planning applications received by the local planning authority, including the review of SEWBREC data searches	The description of ecological review covers the full range of ecological scrutiny practised in the planning process. This begins with initial shifting and consideration of ecological potential for the huge majority of planning applications, through to those sites requiring site visits, scoping of required ecological assessments, review and scrutiny of submitted ecological assessments to mitigation development and ultimately ecological recommendations in accordance with adopted planning policy.	
2.2	monitor implementation of planning mitigation	Richard Wistow/Jen Wakeford	on-going	2019			PPW10 includes reference (6.2.12). Using existing S106 quarterly meetings and monthly biodiversity meetings to establish procedures.		

2.3	monitor the impact of development on SINC	Richard Wistow/Clare Hewitt	on-going	2011	During 2017-2018 two Site of Importance Nature Conservation (SINC) sites were affected by development. An application for a cycle track secured a mitigation scheme via conditions and a long term woodland management plan was secured through a s106 agreement for a small supermarket proposal	data regarding the impact of development on SINC and any mitigation is published in the LDP Annual Monitoring Report on 31st October 2019	data regarding the impact of development on SINC and any mitigation is published in the LDP Annual Monitoring Report on 31st October 2020		
2.4	management of S106 agreements	Richard Wistow	on-going	1998	23 S106 Agreements with long term habitat management requirements. Process co-ordinated through the RCT S106 Register meetings process.	Continued progress on S106 agreement delivery. Key actions in 2018/19 included the delivery of peat bog restoration at Hirwau Industrial estate, similar peatland restoration on three windfarm sites, and action towards securing long-term habitat management of Pant Marsh. The S106 Register meetings provide vital Council lead/over view of this process.	to end Sept 19: outline management plans prepared for 5 sites (Parc Eirin, Cefn yr Hendy, Danygraig Heights, Pant Marsh and Llanharan Quarry) where land and funding is vested with the Council. Works have been undertaken at Cefn yr Hendy, Pant Marsh and Parc Eirin. On-going work at Penycymoedd (including Heritage Lottery bid, approved in August). Annual monitoring of 14 (developer) management plans by ecologist/tree officer. 24 agreements under negotiation/awaiting trigger points.		
2.5	evidence relating to the multiple benefits of negotiated S106 agreements to inform the review of the LDP	Liz Dean / Richard Wistow	project	2015	contract let to Wildlife Trust to digitise S.106 agreements for biodiversity	further work with the Wildlife Trust to develop 'opportunity' mapping and associated management plans	Continued liaison with Wildlife Trust towards the completion of the 'opportunity' mapping project in accordance with LDP review programme		
2.6	Ensure the new Biodiversity Duty is reflected in the review of the LDP	Liz Dean / Richard Wistow/ Owen Jones	project	2018		brief discussion with Owen Jones 06/18, PPW10 published 12/18 reinforces current LDP policy and includes extensive references to Biodiversity Duty (6.2.2, 6.2.12, 6.4.2, 6.4.5, 6.4.9, box p136).	Report on LDP preparation to cabinet (18/06/19). Note prepared for the LDP Review Report (08/19). Welsh Government published the Development Plans Manual and the National Development Framework for consultation		
2.7	and in the new Strategic Plan for the Cardiff City Region, City Deal and Metro proposals	Liz Dean / Richard Wistow/ Owen Jones	project	2018		brief discussion with Owen Jones 06/18, PPW10 published 12/18 reinforces policy	Strategic Development Plan (regional) reported to Cabinet (06/19). Issue of Biodiversity Duty and SDP raised at Wales meeting in June. Welsh Government published the Development Plans Manual and the National Development Framework for consultation.		
2.8	and in the new Strategic Opportunity Area proposals	Liz Dean/Sarah Mee	project	2018	SOAs to cabinet	brief discussion with Owen Jones 06/18	Regeneration to lead on each. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cynon Gateway – Energizing the Region: Sarah Mee • The Wider Pontypridd, Treforest – Edge of the City, Heart of the Region: Debbie Pike • Pontypridd Town – Pivotal in the Region: Andrea Vlrgo • A4119 Corridor: Regional Rhondda Gateway: Rhian Jones • Llanilid on the M4: Driving the Regional Economy: Rhian Jones 		
2.9	use of sewbrec data	Richard Wistow Bethan Jenkins	on-going	2009	Planning have a Service Level Agreement with SEWBREC	Planning have a Service Level Agreement with SEWBREC	Planning have a Service Level Agreement with SEWBREC		

2.10	Green Infrastructure Assessment	Liz Dean/ Clare Hewitt	on going	2019		PPW 10 published 05/12/18 with requirement for GI assessment	brief note prepared, discussions with LDP team		
2.11	Ensure new statutory nature conservation designations are mapped onto Corporate GIS systems - responsible body ITC	Michael Brutsch	project	2019			SSSI layer updated 30/04/19	RCT Ecologist is the most likely consultee that NRW will contact when new SSSI are designated.	
3. Biodiversity and land /estate management									
3.1	cut and collect	John Spanswick/ Steve Owen/Gareth Henson/ Richard Wistow/Marie Fowler	on-going	2016	First full season of cutting using new 'Cut and Collect machine' primarily focused on pilot site network in Taff Ely area, with smaller number of Cynon Valley sites. Production of commissioned grass verge invertebrate survey report by Liam Olds assessing a sample of RCT conservation verges.	Expanded programme of mainly autumn/winter conservation grass verge and open space management using 'cut and collect' machine. Extended programme of sites in the Cynon Valley and new sites in the Rhondda. Discussions with Cemeteries department regarding extension of works to new cemetery sites.	Numerous meetings and training sessions with Streetcare, following the transfer of grasscutting. Visits, lists and mapping of additional sites in Cynon, Rhondda and Taf for 2020. Grassland notices for Cemeteries.	Re-organisation of service provision has seen the 'Cut and Collect' machine operation moved to the Streetcare Department.	
3.2	Transfer of management works from Parks and Countryside section to Streetcare to identify biodiversity training/information provision (as raised in 2017SSE), in particular with regard to the Wildlife Law aspects, such as protocols for nesting birds, sensitive areas (e.g. dormouse priority areas, SSSI) etc.	Richard Wistow/ Nigel Wheeler	project	2018		meeting requested email of 26/06/18, 15min slot at senior management meeting in 27/09/18, 4 SSE covered (fleet, waste/streetcare, highways, transportation). Meeting with Steve Owen 23/10/18, tool box talks for supervisors.	meetings with team leaders held, site signs, notices etc. supplied, social media proposal for 2020 season in preparation.	grass verge management transferred from Parks to Streetcare in April 2018. Parks supervisors transferred from April 2019.	
3.3	Corporate Estates Department liaise with Council's Countryside section regarding occasional third party requests for positive biodiversity land management licences on Council owned land	Richard Wistow/ Richard Skinner	on-going	2017		on-going working between Corporate estates and Countryside section, with ecological advice provided as opportunities arise. This led in 2018/19 to Corporate estates successfully identifying a new conservation grazing area at Cwm Fields, Beddau, which has been included in the Countryside Conservation grazing land portfolio.	ecological advisory role continued as opportunities and issues arise, including advice on potential grazing opportunities for 'rented' grazing sites.		
3.4	Japanese Knotweed management on Council land	Ray Edwards	on going		266 sites treated	321 sites treated, input to Wales wide Wildlife Trust led bid to WG for INNS funding from 2019.	Wildlife Trust grant bid approved. Council treatment data available end of April 2020		
3.5	Fly Tipping control/removal	Nigel Wheeler/ Tim Jones	on going		3731 flytips removed	3150 flytips removed	data available end of April 2020		
3.6	Corporate estates department liaise with Council's Countryside section regarding biodiversity implications of land disposal, and building refurbishments, demolitions and new developments	various	on going		on-going advisory role as issues arise.	on-going advisory role as issues arise.	ad hoc advice given for example Cwmbach school roof collapse and bat issues		

3.7	Healthy Hillside/Grazing site work	Richard Wistow/ Kelly Daniels	on going	2013	As part of Healthy Hillside partnership project 4 RCT owned sites put forward for positive fire prevention management. Through partnership funding two of these received initial management. In addition grazing licences let for 4 RCT owned conservation grazing sites.	Healthy Hillside partnership developed an EnRaW Welsh Government grant bid to bring forward funded management on up to 5 RCT Council owned sites. Continued pilot management on 2 of these sites. Continued RCT Conservation grazing programme, and through planing agreement requirements secured conservation grazing on 2 other sites (Aberdare College and Hirwaun Industrial Estate).	Healthy Hillside EnRaW project successful, although details still in discussion with WG and project success not yet formally announced. 6 RCT conservation grazing sites and an additional planing related grazing scheme started.	Health Hillside project identified in RCT and Merthyr Community Safety plan as a multiple partnership project delivering best practice for grass fire prevention	
4. Biodiversity and water management									
4.1	ordinary water course consents	Liam Swanwick/ Richard Wistow	on going	2012	observations on 16 ordinary watercourse applications	observations on 36 ordinary watercourse applications	observations on 30 ordinary watercourse applications (to end Aug).		
4.2	introduction and operation of sustainable drainage (SUDS) regulations	Owen Griffiths	on going	2015	observations made (esp on relationship with planning) to Owen Griffiths in drainage who responded to WG	Sardis House training workshop led by Owen Griffiths and Liam Swanwick on SUDS introduction in Jan 2019. Similar presentation to be given to SLT and to members. Biodiversity a strong feature, Council responsibility for management for the lifetime of the development. SUDS in Council development eg Abercynon Park and Ride	no full applications to end August	see Park Lane School below	
4.3	Park Lane School SUDS	Richard Wistow / Darren Miller / Mark Powell	project	2019			email from RW to Owen Griffiths et al, agreed to marshy grassland approach suitable for 'cut and collect' 04/19, design in progress, draft text for Corporate Performance Report May19. Issues re space for proposed women's football pitches, design currently on hold.	objective to achieve flood risk reduction for the school, utilizing space between Aberdare Park and a redundant pitch. A marshy grassland site, which can be 'cut and collect', provide outdoor education space for the school and contribute to the rhos pasture network for the marsh fritillary butterfly.	
5. Biodiversity and education									
5.1	walk to the wild	Liz Dean	on going	2014	6 school engagements at Aberdare Park Primary (Aberdare Park), Cilfynydd Primary (Albion tips), Ponty High (Albion tips and school grounds), YGG Llyn y forwen (Darren Park), Ynysboeth (former school grounds) and one INSET day for teachers held in Pontyclun. Additional projects through WG funding at Ponty High and Ferndale comprehensive	delay in WG grant, delay in letting the contract. Inset day held at Dare Valley Country Park in Sept. 6 school engagements undertaken at Alaw primary (Garth Park), Gwaunmeisgyn primary (school grounds), Penygawsi primary (school grounds), Cwmbach Church in Wales primary (Brodeg woodland Cwmbach), oaklands primary, Parc Lane Special School (Aberdare Park). Additional works with Ponty High and Ferhill Comp with WG funding. Funding ceases March 2019. Input to regional bid for outdoor learning funding.	Grant funding ceased. Regional bid for outdoor learning failed. Training meeting and AGM of the RCT and Merthyr Outdoor Learning Group held at Ynysangharad Park Pontypridd, 4th July. Activities led by Rhian Vale, 12 mostly teachers attended. New chair elected (Ian Timbrell Cwmbach Community School).	Ambition to continue 'Walk to the Wild' if funding can be identified and to publish the resources generated to date on the website.	Mar-19

6. Biodiversity and advice to the public									
7. Biodiversity and corporate planning									
7.1	Service Self Evaluation of Biodiversity	Lesley Lawson/ Liz Dean	on going	2017	service self evaluation for biodiversity prepared, issued in Oct 17, responses collated and priority actions for 2018/19 identified	action plan updated, question for autumn 2018 SSE included, best practice note prepared for WG. Input to corporate performance report for 17/18	Action plan updated, Input to corporate performance report for 18/19		
7.2	Biodiversity Duty Plan	Richard Wistow/ Liz Dean	on going	2016	one page information report to CwmTaf PSB mar/apr 17. Draft Biodiversity Duty Plan prepared, presentation to Senior Leadership Team Nov 17, Scrutiny Committee report in Dec 17	meeting with Alan Netherwood July 18, action plan updated	Action plan updated, report to scrutiny 10th Oct and Cabinet 21st Nov to allow submission to Welsh Government by December 2019.	legal duty to report to WG in Dec 19	
7.3	Procurement Services continue to address biodiversity within its service provision and consider in policy reviews and associated documentation and processes.	Liz Dean/ Steve Vaughan		2018		initial contact re ethical procurement policy. Policy under review, documentation on WG website. Discussion about single use plastics (05/07/18)	Through consultation with relevant service areas and suppliers, the Council's Procurement Service is in the process of implementing a robust approach to the reduction of single use plastics. The approach adopted to date, aligns itself with the 'Plastics Recycling Route Map' for Wales.		
8. Working with neighbouring authorities and other statutory bodies									
8.1	input to area statements	Liz Dean / Richard Wistow		2017	initial expression of interest completed and circulated to other Council staff	attended workshop at WBP conference 09/18, NRW presentation to RCT LBAP meeting in Jan 19, NRW ecosystem meeting on 21 feb 19	attended workshop on 8 May, submitted paperwork. Submission re data gaps (natural regeneration of woodland, soil carbon). Agreed to participate in Audit Commission review of AS process.		
8.2	WG ENRaW grant bids	Richard Wistow/ Liz Dean	project	2018		attendance at Wales LBAP meetings, S wales co-ordination meetings from Jul18, input to bids for Rhos pasture, Healthy Hillside, pollinators, outdoor learning, Wales wide LNPPartnerships, Hirwaun Industrial Estate, Bridgend Green Spaces, KWT community Officers, Groundwork skills development, Ramblers Wales wide, Vale led bridleways. Various bids submitted by 3rd Dec deadline.	Successful bids for Rhos Pasture (Butterfly Conservation), Healthy Hillside (Wildlife Trust), LNP partnerships (WCVA/WBP), Hirwaun Ind Estate (RCT), KWT, Pollinators and freshwater Invertebrates (Buglife), bridleways (Vale).		
9. Other									

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Appendix Three: Priority Habitats in RCT and Merthyr from Priority Habitats of Wales: a technical guide edited by Jones, Stevens, Blackstock, Burrows and Howe (2003) CCW/WAG/Biodiversity Wales

Welsh LBAP area	upland oak wood	upland mixed ash wood	wet wood land	lowland beech and yew	lowland mixed deciduous	total natural broadleaf woodland	lowland meadow	lowland calcaereous meadow	lowland dry acid grassland	purple moorgrass and rush pasture	lowland heathland	reedbed	fen	lowland raised bog	coastal floodplain and grazing marsh	upland heathland	blanket bog	upland calcaereous grassland	limestone pavement	maritime cliff and slope	coastal vegetated shingle	sand dune	salt marsh
RCT						1700	44	0.2	1400	1500	400	0.8	130	9	130	980	850	0	0	0	0	0	0
Merthyr						510	10	28	500	260	160	0	25	0	0	450	0.2	30	1	0	0	0	0
Glamorgan	3200	3100	1200	690	1600	9800	240	260	5400	5500	2100	84	730	30	3200	3800	1000	30		310	17	1500	1600
Wales	39000	17000	9000	4000	12000	82600	1700	1200	39500	35200	12500	460	6200	1830	54600	79000	56200	650	54	3500	110	6200	5800

(NB excludes priority habitats on WG Forestry land)

Welsh LBAP area	total	LBAP land area	% cover of priority habitat type
RCT	7200	37021	20
Merthyr	2000	8647	23
Glamorgan	35700	224552	16
Wales	387300	2115359	18

(NB excludes priority habitats on WG Forestry land)

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RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

17th DECEMBER 2019

EMPLOYMENT STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN 2019/21

REPORT OF DIRECTOR PUBLIC HEALTH, PROTECTION & COMMUNITY SERVICES IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE CABINET MEMBER FOR WELLBEING AND PROSPERITY, COUNCILLOR RHYS LEWIS

Author(s): Wendy Edwards, Service Director Community Services – 01443 425512

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is provide Members with an opportunity to consider the proposed Rhondda Cynon Taf Employment Strategy and Action Plan 2019-2021.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 2.1 Approves the Employment Strategy and Action Plan 2019/21.

3. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Developing a strategy for employment is important for several reasons. It will:

- Focus limited resources and support on those most in need so that they can improve their own and their families' futures;
- Consolidate the link between learning/training provision and local and regional labour market needs;
- Ensure that Council services and partners are clear about the direction of travel and the outcomes that we will be working to achieve;
- Identify any gaps in provision so that they can be addressed;
- Help us to jointly prepare for the introduction of new national initiatives and the ending of some current funding sources so that there is a smooth transition for the benefit of communities and individuals.

- 3.2 Local data indicates that there remains a need to improve skills and qualifications and increase employability.

3.3 The Strategy and Action Plan have been scrutinised by the Finance and Performance Scrutiny Committee who were supportive of the proposal.

4. CONTEXT

4.1 Employability is defined as the combination of factors and processes that enable people to progress towards or get into employment, to stay in employment and progress in the workplace.

4.2 Increasing employability is essential to improving prosperity and reducing inequality. People are less likely to live in poverty if they are in employment and if they can sustain and progress in employment. There is evidence to suggest that even short-term unemployment can have a significant long-term impact on an individual's financial security and wellbeing.

4.3 Worklessness is the short-hand term used to refer to people who are currently out of work and looking for employment as well as people who are claiming benefits and who are economically inactive and may not be in a position to look for work.

4.4 People who fall into the economically inactive category include:

- Students;
- Retired people;
- People looking after a home or family;
- People who suffer from long-term sickness;
- People who are temporarily sick;
- People who are 'discouraged'.

4.5 The rate of economic inactivity for people aged 16 – 64 years has reduced steadily over the last 3 years and in July 2019 stood at 35,200 which was only 0.3% higher than the percentage for Wales. Compared to the previous year there has been a reduction in the number of students (from 8,500 to 7,800); the number of people looking after a home/ family (from 7,300 to 5,100); and a slight reduction in the number of long-term sick (from 13,500 to 12,100) who are claiming benefits.

4.6 It is notable however that fewer people who are currently economically inactive identified they wanted a job in 2018/19 than in 2017/18 (6,500 compared to 10,800). It is not clear why this is the case.

4.7 The annual unemployment figures (that is, people who are registered as actively looking for work) has seen a slight increase during the past 3 financial years with the figure for April 2018 - March 2019 indicating 6,800 people had been unemployed and looking for work. The claimant count in July 2019 was 4,385 which is 2.9% of the working age population. This is consistent with the percentage for Wales. The rate of unemployment in the age range that is higher than the comparative data for Wales is that for

young people aged 18-24 years and specifically 18-21 years where the percentage difference is 1.1%. (NOMIS)

- 4.8 Skills and qualifications are an important determinant of a person's ability to gain and sustain employment. The most recent data (January-December 2018) indicates that 16,100 people in Rhondda Cynon Taf aged 16 – 64 years have no qualifications. This amounts to 10.8% of the working age population compared with 8.6% for Wales. (NOMIS) It is important to address this issue as well as to ensure that there are pathways for people who have lower level qualifications to enhance their qualification level and progress to higher level learning.
- 4.9 The changing nature of employment requires people to be flexible and to develop skills and qualifications throughout their life-times if they are to remain in work and progress in employment. It is important therefore that training and advice providers have a good understanding of labour market needs and provision in their areas and that relevant learning/training programmes are developed to ensure that individuals gain the skills and qualifications they need to fill those vacancies. Similarly there needs to be a synergy between employment support programmes and learning programmes if limited resources are to be used to maximum effect.

5. CURRENT SKILLS AND EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMMES

- 5.1 Our aim is to work with partners to provide a joined up approach that will ensure that there is access to relevant learning and training programmes that reflect the needs of employers and effective employment and advice services to support individuals to gain, stay and progress in work.
- 5.2 Rhondda Cynon Taf's Employment Pathway has been designed in collaboration with training provider partners (Appendix 1). This is a strategic approach that ensures that services and organisations work together to ensure that people have the opportunity to access the learning and skills required to improve their employability, alongside the mentoring and employment support to gain and sustain paid employment. This has had a positive impact on provision and ensured that limited resources have been used to maximum effect. The current range of skills and employment support programmes delivered by the Council are outlined in Appendix 2.
- 5.3 In 2018 a Strategic Employment Group was established with representatives from the following organisations:
- RCT Community Services;
 - RCT Education, Employment, and Training;
 - RCT Regeneration and Prosperity;
 - RCT Youth Engagement and Participation Service;
 - RCT 21st century schools;
 - Coleg y Cymoedd;

- Department of Work and Pensions;
- Careers Wales;
- Trivallis;
- Rhondda Housing Association;
- Newydd Housing Association;
- Hafod Housing Association;
- Rhondda Housing Association;
- Cynon Taf Housing Association;
- Prime Cymru;
- Adult Community Learning Partnership;
- Citizens Advice Bureau.

The purpose of the group is to ensure that we work together to map provision, share information on new initiatives and good practice as well as to explore opportunities to apply for additional funding when available

- 5.4 All these organisations have, at their core, a commitment to provide the best learning, advice and employment support for their customers. This common commitment will be of vital importance in the coming years as ESF funding which supports a significant amount of skills and employment support ends.
- 5.5 The proposed Employment and Skills Strategy has been developed in consultation with this group.

6. EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS STRATEGY 2019-21

- 6.1 The Strategy has been guided by themes identified by the Welsh Government in their strategic documents and also informed by regional priorities as identified by the Regional Skills Partnership and Cardiff City Deal developments. The strategic priorities contribute to the Council's 3 themes of Prosperity, People and Place as outlined in the Corporate Plan 2016-20.
- 6.2 The Strategy (Appendix 3) proposes the following vision:

We want to live in a community where:

- All people have access to the support they need to develop their skills and knowledge so that they can achieve their potential and live healthy and rewarding lives;
- Everyone who wants to work is supported to gain and stay in employment;
- Those who want to progress in work are able to benefit from opportunities to further develop their skills and gain promotion;
- There is access to training and learning throughout a person's life as a commitment to lifelong learning is essential for prosperity.

6.3 The aim is to achieve the following outcomes:

- There will be an improvement in the self-esteem and confidence of customers who engage with our programmes;
- An improvement in the health and well-being of people participating in learning programmes;
- An increase in individual skills and qualification so that the percentage of people with no qualifications in Rhondda Cynon Taf will be lower than the average for Wales;
- Training programmes offered will be relevant to the skills needs identified by employers;
- More volunteering options will be available;
- More people will benefit from good quality work experience opportunities;
- More in-work support will be available to people once they have entered employment;
- Customer satisfaction with the level of support offered will be increased;
- More opportunities will be available for people who have a disability or a long-term health condition to re-enter, gain or sustain employment.

7. THE EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS ACTION PLAN

7.1 This proposed plan outlines activities that will be delivered in order to meet the priorities highlighted in the strategy and achieve the required outcomes. It can be seen at Appendix 4.

7.2 It is recognised that this action plan will need to be flexible as developments in relation to skills and training at a national level will be introduced over the next two years which may require significant re-modelling of provision. This includes the implementation of Job Support Wales, the creation of a national strategic body for adult community learning and the ending of ESF programmes as a result of Brexit.

7.3 The action plan will be regularly monitored by the Strategic Employment Group and reports on progress can be provided to Members as required.

8. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

8.1 This strategy and action plan is designed to ensure equal access to learning and employment support and to reduce the barriers to employment and personal development. There is an emphasis on supporting more people with disabilities and long term health conditions to re-enter or sustain work as this is an area of concern at a Wales wide level.

9. CONSULTATION

- 9.1 Training and advice provider partners who sit on the Strategic Employment Group have been consulted on the proposed strategy and action plan. Representatives of Learning Disability service users and their carers have also been consulted due to their expert knowledge of the barriers experienced by people with learning disabilities in relation to learning and employment.
- 9.2 The Finance and Performance Scrutiny Committee considered the proposed Employment Strategy and Action Plan on 4th November and were supportive of the recommendations that were made in the report presented to them.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 There are no financial implications aligned to this report. The strategy and action plan are designed to ensure best use of current and future resources.

11. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 11.1 There are no legal implications aligned to this report. There is no statutory requirement for Local Authorities to deliver adult community learning. However, S.22 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000 requires Local Authorities to ensure there are sufficient facilities within their area for part-time adult learning provision.

12. LINKS TO THE COUNCIL'S CORPORATE PLAN/OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES/WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT

- 12.1 The strategy and action plan link clearly to the three main themes of the Council's Corporate Plan with its emphasis on prosperity, people and place. Developing skills and gaining and sustaining employment is the main way in which people can improve their own prosperity and enhance their health and wellbeing, while the level of employment in an area has an impact on the whole community.
- 12.2 A significant number of organisations have been involved in the development of the strategy and action plan which will require collaborative action to achieve the outcomes identified. It is likely to result in a further integration of programmes over the longer-term as funding sources and contractual obligations are changed in response to national developments. Ensuring meaningful programmes to support the development of skills and enable people to gain employment and stay in employment will improve the lives of individuals and their families preventing them from falling into poverty or helping them to rise out of poverty.

12.3 This report relates to the following Wellbeing goals:

- A prosperous Wales – improving learning and skills and supporting people into employment will reduce the level of poverty in the County;
- A more equal Wales – the strategy ensures that people of all backgrounds and abilities have an equal chance to access the learning and support they need;
- A healthier Wales – ensuring access to learning and employment is recognised as having a positive impact on health and well-being;
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language – there is a commitment to provide learning and improve confidence through offering access to provision in the medium of Welsh and also using arts as a vehicle to improve employability.

13. CONCLUSION

13.1 As indicated in the report, there are significant reasons why a strategy and action plan for Employment is required at this time. The vision, priorities and outcomes included in the strategy have been agreed by the Strategic Employment Group while the Action Plan indicates the actions that Council services will implement to contribute to the achievement of the strategy.

13.2 The Strategy and Action Plan were considered by the Finance and Performance Scrutiny Committee in November and Members were supportive of the recommendation to approve their implementation.



LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

17TH DECEMBER 2019

**REPORT OF DIRECTOR PUBLIC HEALTH, PROTECTION & COMMUNITY
SERVICES IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE CABINET MEMBER FOR
WELLBEING AND PROSPERITY, COUNCILLOR RHYS LEWIS**

Item: Employment Strategy and Action Plan 2019-21

Background Papers

Background papers should be a List of documents relating to the subject matter of the report which in the officers opinion will:

- a) Disclose any facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the report is based; and
- b) Which have been relied on to a material extent in preparing the report

But does not include published works or those which disclose exempt or confidential information

Officer to contact: David Batten, Head of Leisure, Parks & Countryside – 01443 562202

Rhondda Cynon Taf's Employment Pathway aims to provide equitable access to employment support and opportunities that align to emerging local labour market needs and employers.

Partners have worked together to develop a streamlined, strategic approach that ensures services and organisations work collaboratively to provide sufficient and appropriate support, training and guidance, to enable people to gain and sustain paid employment of their choosing.

The Employment Pathway has recently been updated to reflect Welsh Government's modelling.

There are five phases to the WG and RCT Employment Pathway for adults and young people.

Entry can be at any Stage/Tier determined by the needs of the person.



Stage/Tier One – Getting Involved

Those who are furthest from the labour market e.g.

- Not yet ready to work
- Not interested in working
- Need support to engage with employability and skills provision.

Stage/Tier Two – Becoming More Employable

Those who need support to increase personal, technical and transferable skills and experience relevant to work e.g.

- Those with no or low skills
- Those with little relevant and/or current quotable experience

Stage/Tier Three – Getting a Job

Those who need limited support to take the final steps to secure fair work e.g.

- People who have only recently become workless
- Those with single or simple barriers

Stage/Tier Four – Staying in the Job

Those who are at risk of disengaging from work and those more sensitive to labour force changes; those more likely to be in or at risk of in-work poverty e.g:

- those recently employed following support.
- low or unskilled and low paid
- underemployed, zero hour contracts holders, those working in the gig economy and those affected by welfare reform e.g. UC
- employed people with significant dependent care needs or work limiting health conditions etc

Stage/Tier Five – Progressing in Employment

Those who are relatively secure in work but who are unlikely to progress e.g.

- low skilled workers unable to access training opportunities without additional support
- workers, however highly skilled, whose skills do not match with their current job or industry
- those working in a declining industry or occupational sector.

Appendix 2 – Learning and Skills Programmes delivered by Rhondda Cynon Taf Council

A wide range of programmes are delivered by Council services to support people who have left full-time education. These include programmes designed to improve skills or support well-being as well as programmes that are specifically focussed on supporting people into work. These are delivered by:

- the Adult Education Service,
- Communities for Work/Communities for Work +;
- Education, Employment and Training service;
- the Youth Engagement and Participation Service;
- Organisational Development (HR)

Adult Education Service

The Council's Adult Education Service delivers adult community learning programmes in Rhondda Cynon Taf and is the Lead Body for the Adult Community Learning Partnership in the county. The service provides support, in the main to people over the age of 25.

The service has one lifelong learning centre at Garth Olwg that facilitates a wide range of provision delivered by Council services and other partners including courses, workshops, events and theatre performances.

The majority of courses and programmes are delivered at libraries, community centres and other venues across the county. In 2017/18 learning was delivered at 96 venues.

Provision is targeted at those who are most disadvantaged and would benefit from gaining skills and qualifications although there is also a programme of activities designed to enhance the well-being of participants and to support the social integration and independence of older residents or those who have a life-limiting health condition.

The service's **pre- employment programme** is funded by the Community Learning Grant and runs as either a 2 or 4 week programme delivering a number of accredited courses through either Agored Cymru or Qualsafe. The programme is built around the specific needs of the learners on each course and individuals can choose from a suite of qualifications including resilience skills, creating the right image, telephone skills, job interview skills, team working to name a few. If successful, learners can then progress onto the more sector specific Employment Routes provision or may decide to focus on developing a particular skill further.

The service provides a range of **digital skills** courses, from basic Introduction to Computing to ECDL courses. A 4 week programme delivered for Communities for Work+ to further develop the skills of people who have engaged with Digital Fridays provision has been particularly successful and a clear progression pathway has been developed in partnership with Communities for Work+ and Adult Learning Wales for learners who wish to enhance their digital skills further.

The focus on ensuring that learning meets local needs has also ensured that services work closely with local employers. The **Employment Routes** programme developed by the service has been successful in developing training programmes with employers who have vacancies and ensuring that learners who successfully complete the training and gain the relevant qualifications are assured of an interview. 46 businesses have engaged with the service and contributed to the development of the programme. These include both local and national companies.

Essential skills courses are funded through an agreement with Coleg y Cymoedd. They are set up for the year but learners can join at any time. They are open to anyone over the age of 16 who has a literacy and/or numeracy skills need. Learners are able to attend more than one class a week. All learners are assessed using the Welsh Government's Essential Skills Toolkit (WEST) or a paper-based assessment. Their needs are identified from the assessment and a relevant Agored Cymru qualification is selected for them to work towards. Individual support is provided by the tutor. Classes have learners of varying levels of need and, consequently a maximum of 10 learners are enrolled on each course. The majority of classes are held at libraries, job centres and community venues. Specific provision is provided for:

- Carers
- people who need to achieve a Level 2 qualification so that they can enrol on Employment Routes provision (some employers, for example the NHS require employees to have this as a minimum qualification);
- people who work in Vision Products
- people with mental health conditions

The **Independent Learning Skills** programme, funded through an agreement with Coleg y Cymoedd, provides opportunities for people with moderate or severe learning disabilities to achieve a 3 - credit qualification. The courses are held at a variety of venues over two terms and 122 learners are currently engaged on a varied curriculum. The majority of learners arrive at the centres by buses provided by the Adult Services team and carers attend with them. This provision is valued highly by the learners themselves, their families and the Day Centre staff who support the provision. It provides an opportunity for learners to gain confidence, raise their self-esteem and meet new people as well as learn new skills.

Inspire 2 Work is an ESF Priority 3 programme that offers a supported Employment Pathway to young people aged 16-24 years living in Rhondda Cynon Taf, providing guidance and training to strengthen the position of young people seeking employment in line with Welsh Government's Youth Engagement and Progression Framework guidelines, and Supporting Engagement in Education, Employment and Training Strategy. The project is focussed on young people with low aspirations, no or low qualifications, those who have difficulty in engaging or participating and who lack awareness of the services that are available to meet their support needs.

To date the project has engaged with 413 young people, 71 of whom have entered employment, 202 have gained qualifications (with some currently going through the accreditation process) and 28 have gone on to further training and education. The funding for this project ends in December 2020.

The service works closely with a wide range of organisations to develop provision that supports the Council's **well-being** agenda. Examples of this work include:

- provision of workshops for the Carer's project such as social media, sugar-craft and sign language;
- collaboration with the Hapi project on 'All about me' – provision for people diagnosed with the early stages of dementia and their family members;
- provision of courses prescribed by Cwm Taf Health Board and the Parc Canol surgery for patients with low level depression and anxiety;
- leisure/hobby-based courses designed to enable people to pursue their interests – of particular relevance to people who are no longer working whether that is due to retirement, ill-health or other reasons

- Chatty café, Knit and Knatter and Age-friendly dancing cater for people of all ages who have common interests

Welsh-medium provision is facilitated and contributes to the achievement of the Council's Strategy and Action Plan for the Promotion and Facilitation of the Welsh Language including a weekly Ti a Fi provision for parents and carers of babies and toddlers and Cymraeg i Blant at Garth Olwg Lifelong Learning Centre. Welsh-medium courses and pathways for learners from Welsh language classes on to other courses delivered in the medium of Welsh are facilitated and jointly planned with key partners.

Of particular note in respect of **Garth Olwg Lifelong Learning Centre** is that it hosts the activities of 63 community groups and organisations and provides access to a wide range of advice, information and guidance not just learning opportunities to residents.

Communities for Work (CfW)

This programme is delivered in partnership with the Department of Work and Pensions.

The focus of the CfW programme is to help those furthest away from the labour market in to employment, education or training, or to move closer to the labour market.

Priority 1 of the CfW Programme focuses on the provision of mentoring support, access to qualifications, work experience, and volunteering opportunities for adults over the age of 25 who are long term unemployed and economically inactive living in Communities First areas with a view to helping them to secure employment.

Priority 3 of the CfW Programme provides young people aged 16-24 including those who are Not in Education, Employment or Training, living in Communities First areas, with mentoring support to access Education, Employment or Training.

The majority of training is accessed through ACT, the preferred supplier for training provision identified by Welsh Government.

Up to August 2019 the following outcomes have been achieved for adults:

- 1,084 participants engaged
- 120 job entries
- 633 qualifications gained
- 164 increasing employment

Outcomes for the youth provision by August 2019 is as follows:

- 870 engagements
- 166 job entries
- 326 qualifications gained
- 55 entered edycartin/training

Communities for Work +

CfW+ has been designed to be wraparound support service for Communities for Work, and other European Social Fund (ESF) projects, where people are not eligible for support. This replaced the previous Communities First programme. It consists of two new grant funded programmes namely the CfW+ employment support programme and Legacy fund.

CfW+ offers support to all residents in RCT who are looking to get into employment, training or volunteering.

CfW+ is also able to offer in-work support to those we support into work or those clients on low incomes who are looking to retrain or upskill.

The programme is available across the whole of RCT.

We focus work with Adults 25+ who are ineligible for support through ESF grant funded programmes. Young people aged 16-24 are also able to access support if there is no other suitable provision available from other services or ESF grant funded programmes.

The Legacy fund supports projects that have been identified as best practice and meet local priorities. The Council made the decision to utilise the Legacy fund to:

- support voluntary sector partners that previously delivered projects under the Communities First programme that achieved good outcomes to ensure the continuation of good practice delivery;
- commission core offer activities where good outcomes have been achieved.

The collective CfW+ & Legacy programmes deliver on three key elements:-

- **Local Engagement** - These activities are based upon local need & getting people involved. Our Engagement teams organise a number of local activities and events including well-being coffee mornings, day courses, confidence building sessions & support groups.
- **Core Activities** - These include Work Clubs, Digital Fridays, RCT Leisure, Essential Skills (Maths, English, IT), Adult Learning Courses. We commission RCT Adult Education to deliver the Employment Routes programme.
- **1:1 Mentoring** - Our Employment Mentors support people, through 1:1 tailored sessions, to gain qualifications, find work placements & secure employment.

Outcomes achieved during 2018/19

- 3,939 people registered with CfW+ and Legacy programmes
- 714 people received 1:1 employment mentoring
- 393 people gained employment
- 216 people improved their basic IT skills
- 767 people gained a total of 1,370 qualifications
- 144 people entered a work placement
- 82 people enrolled on In-Work support, of which 86.5% either sustained employment or increased their working hours

Other Legacy outcomes achieved with family and youth engagement programmes:

- 904 people improved mental well-being
- 57 increased physical activity through RCT Leisure

- 428 know how to access help & support
- 364 feel more a part of their community
- 492 foodbank vouchers were issued to 272 individuals

Education, Employment and Training Service (HR)

This service is located within the Council's Human Resources department and leads on the management and provision of a range programmes for the Council as follows:

Apprenticeship Scheme - The Council's Apprenticeship Scheme has been running since September 2012. During that time, over 180 Apprentices have been employed across the Council in many different service areas. The Scheme is open to anyone from the age of 16. There is no upper age limit. Apprenticeships with RCT Council are fixed for two years and paid at National Minimum Wage, depending on age.

Graduate Scheme - Each of the graduate schemes offer a unique opportunity to learn new skills, develop professionally and start a career in community-based public service. Graduates will:

- Earn £26,317 per year on a 37-hour contract
- Complete a range of fully-funded professional qualifications
- Undergo mentoring with a senior member of staff
- Be entitled to participate in a wide-range of staff benefit schemes All successful applicants will be enrolled on a Project Management Level 4 qualification, which will include day release for University attendance

Work experience - Rhondda Cynon Taf Council's work experience programme enables people to carry out and/or observe a range of tasks or duties as an employee, but with the emphasis on learning. Anyone can apply for a work placement with the Council. RCT Council work with School, College and University students, as well as non-students, to support and source work placements. European work placements and University internships are also facilitated.

Care2Work - The Care2Work programme provides children looked after, young people with care and support needs and care leavers with encouragement and support to identify and access a range of training and employment opportunities.

Step in the right direction - this offers two year paid traineeships for children looked after and care leavers aged 16-25. It develops their skills, knowledge and provides work experience in the Council.

Careers and The World of Work – working within Secondary, SEN and Primary schools in RCT, providing advice and information on further education and employment related opportunities. Provide a number of workshops and information sessions to increase awareness and explore opportunities available to them to develop the skills they need to decide upon and implement their career paths.

Career Fairs – The EET Team arrange two career fairs a year within RCT. Working with partners/employers and key stakeholders.

Gateway to Employment – The EET team in partnership with Coleg y Cymoedd is currently working with 8 learners with additional learning and physical needs and arranging suitable

placements within the Council for one year to increase employability skills and sustainable employment.

Organisational Development (HR)

Building Resilience, Prosperity, and Wellbeing in RCT is an ESF Priority 1 project that offers SME's within the Rhondda, Cynon Taf Local Authority area an opportunity to pay particular attention to staff absence and the organisational responses, and the support available to meet the wellbeing and health of their workforce.

The project is focussed on employed; including self-employed, who are absent from work, with a work limiting health condition or disability, who wish to return to work.

The Project will provide support to:

- **278** Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises within Rhondda, Cynon Taf.
- **2,625** individual participants.

Of these, 20% (580) would be Local Authority employees, 80% (2,323) supported from the Private Sector/SME's.

Specifically developed to provide support to SME's and Individuals, to make the necessary arrangements to enable participants to return to work as quickly as possible, including, but not restricted to:

- Specialist HR support to develop or improve wellbeing, equality and diversity policies and strategies.
- Training for Managers/Employers
- Access to physiotherapists, occupational health nurses, counselling and coaching.

The Project delivery commenced in May 2019, with an expected funding end date in April 2022.

Appendix 3

Draft RCT Employment Strategy 2019-22 – Developing skills for success

Context

Rhondda Cynon Taf Council delivers a wide range of programmes and courses to support the development of skills and improve employability of people aged 16 and over. The provision is delivered across a number of services including the Youth Engagement and Participation Service, Community Services, Education, Employment and Training service.

The Council's employment and skills programmes support the Council's corporate strategies and contribute to strategic priorities as identified in the Council's Corporate Plan – The Way Ahead 2016-20:

- Prosperity – building a strong economy
- People – promoting independence and positive lives for everyone
- Place – creating neighbourhoods where people are proud to live and work

This strategy is has been guided by themes identified by the Welsh Government in their strategic documents including Prosperity for All: Economic Action Plan, the 2018 Employability Plan and Adult Community Learning policy. It has also been informed by regional priorities identified by the Regional Skills Partnership and Cardiff City Deal developments.

Where are we now?

Population profile

Rhondda Cynon Taf's resident population is 240,100, of which 19% are under the age of 16. The ONS census data indicated that 97.1% of residents speak English or Welsh. There has been an increase of almost 3% since 2011 in the number of people who identify that they can speak Welsh bringing the figure up tot 15% of the local population. Only 1% of the population indentify themselves with an ethnicity other than White British, Welsh, English or Scots.

The working age population of the county (16-64 years) is 149,300, of which 73,700 are male and 75,600 are female.

116,700 (76.4%) of the working age population are economically active. In terms of occupations:

- 39.1% of the workforce are in managerial/professional roles;
- 19.9% in administrative/skilled trades;
- 20.3% in caring/leisure and service occupations; and
- 20.7% in process/plant and elementary occupations

In terms of job by industry the highest proportion of workers are in Human Health and Social Work activities (19.2%), Wholesale and Retail (15.1%), Education (13.7%) and Manufacturing (13.7%).

The level of jobs per resident aged 16-64 (job density) is 0.56.

Self employment attracts far more males than females. Data for March 2019 indicates that 7,300 men and 2,900 women were self-employed.

There remains a significant gap in the full-time salaries of male and female residents with the hourly rate for male full-time workers being £13.54 compared to the hourly rate for full-time female workers of £11.70.

The total claimant count for out-of-work benefits in July 2019 was 4,835. The table below indicates the distribution across age groups:

Age	Number
16-17 year	15
18-24 years	1,050
25-49 years	2,370
50+	950

35,200 people are economically inactive, of whom 12,100 are affected by long-term sickness. On a positive note, 6,500 people who are economically inactive have identified that they want a job.

The number of workless households (that is households that contain at least one person aged 16 – 64 where no one aged 16 or over is in employment) is 16,500. While worklessness can be an indication of poverty, it should be noted that recent research has indicated that 55% of people in poverty are in working households, with in-work poverty more common for younger workers and those who work part-time or who are self-employed.

Skills play an important part in determining employment rates and employment rates decline with lower levels of qualifications. People with no qualifications are among the most disadvantaged. 10.8% of working age adults (16,100) in Rhondda Cynon Taf have no qualifications (December 2018) as compared to the Wales comparator of 8.6%. However, 70.6% of the working age population have qualifications at NVQ Level 2+ while 31.2% have qualifications at NVQ Level 4+.

The factors outlined above will have an impact on the type and range of provision being offered to support individuals to gain skills and qualifications as well as the employment advice and support provided to help them into work and support them to stay in work.

Business

In 2018 there were 6,490 enterprises in Rhondda Cynon Taf, of which 90.4% were micro-sized employing 0 – 9 employees. This is a higher percentage of micro-sized businesses than the comparator for Wales (89.1%).

The rate of VAT/PAYE enterprise births remained relatively constant between 2002 and 2012 hovering around the 500 mark. However, a substantial growth can be seen in 2016 and 2017 with business births rising to 1,240 and 2,935 respectively. Business deaths for the same period were 640 and 765 respectively.

Rhondda Cynon Taf's Annual Monitoring Report 2018 on the Local Development Plan indicated that both the housing and commercial markets in the county borough were

experiencing growth, but there is a concern that the decision taken to leave the European Union may lead to the stagnation or decline in sectors such as production, construction and agriculture.

However, there is the potential of significant opportunities in specific sectors becoming available within the county as a result of major infra-structure and other capital investment, the development of the Metro and the impact of Cardiff City Deal as well as the Council's development of key town centres across the county.

The needs of local businesses and opportunities offered on a regional basis for employment must be considered when developing learning and skills programmes so that individuals who want to work are provided with the qualifications and work experience to achieve their goal.

Where do we want to be?

We want to live in a community where:

- all people have access to the support they need to develop their skills and knowledge so that they can achieve their potential and live healthy and rewarding lives;
- everyone who wants to work is supported to gain and stay in employment;
- those who want to progress in work are able to benefit from opportunities to further develop their skills and gain promotion;
- there is access to training and learning throughout a person's life as a commitment to lifelong learning is essential for prosperity

How do we get there?

Rhondda Cynon Taf Council's key priorities for the next 3 years are to:

1. Work with partners to maximise the resources available in Rhondda Cynon Taf for skills development and employment support so that more people are supported to:
 - gain skills for life
 - gain skills for employment
 - secure and stay, and progress in paid employment
2. Work with employers to identify and respond to current and projected skills gaps;
3. Prepare for the impact of Brexit by exploring alternative options for supporting employment programmes in the county e.g. harnessing community benefits to better support the development of employment opportunities for residents.

Commercial business needs must be a driver for the number and type of courses and programmes being delivered so that customers have a realistic prospect of employment, and/or promotion for those already in employment.

In order to achieve these priorities we will:

- Work with training provider partners to ensure there is access to a wide curriculum at all levels with pathways for progression onto higher level programmes
- Work with training and advice provider partners to ensure there are programmes to support people to address barriers to employment and personal development
- Work with employers to prepare people for current and future vacancies and provide on-going support once an individual has gained employment
- Work with employers to promote opportunities for progression, personal development and career enhancement
- Encourage and influence employers to take positive action and promote equality for disabled people when recruiting, selecting, managing and developing staff
- Work with local communities to identify the learning and skills needs of their residents
- Deliver employability support and access to community learning at local venues including community hubs across the county

Outcomes and impacts

We aim to achieve the following outcomes and impacts:

- there will be an improvement in the self-esteem and confidence of customers who engage with our programmes
- an improvement in the health and well-being of people participating in learning programmes
- an increase in individual skills and qualifications so that the percentage of people with no qualifications in Rhondda Cynon Taf will be lower than the average for Wales
- training programmes offered will be relevant to the skills needs identified by employers
- more volunteering options will be available
- more people will benefit from good-quality work experience opportunities
- more in-work support will be available to people once they have entered employment
- customer satisfaction with the level of support offered will be increased
- more opportunities will be available for people who have a disability or a long-term health condition to re-enter or sustain employment

What actions shall we carry out to achieve these outcomes?

We will work with partners in a co-ordinated way that makes sure people receive effective and targeted support to develop skills and knowledge, and gain and remain in work. Appendix 3 includes the Action Plan developed to implement the strategy. This will be monitored regularly by the Strategic Employment Group that includes Council services and a wide range of training provider and advice provider partners from a variety of sectors.

Evaluation

The methodology used to evaluate the success of this strategy and associated action plan will include analysis of:

- relevant quantitative data (facts and figures)
- relevant qualitative information (case studies of individuals and customer views)

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**Rhondda, Cynon, Taf - Employment and Skills Action Plan
2019 – 2021**

Appendix 4

This Action Plan will be liable to change as funding is reviewed annually, either on an academic or financial year basis, and contractual obligations may change to reflect new funding priorities.

What do we want to achieve?	What actions are required to achieve the success we need?	Provision delivered	Responsibility	What are the key PIs that will demonstrate achievement?
<p>All people have access to the support they need to develop their skills and knowledge so that they can achieve their potential and live healthy and rewarding lives;</p>	<p>Work with training provider partners to ensure there is access to a wide curriculum at all levels with pathways for progression onto higher level programmes.</p>	<p><u>Adult Community Learning (ACL)</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adult Community Learning provision to be jointly developed with ACL partners and delivered at community venues across the county. <p>Provision to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essential skills assessments; • Essential skills literacy programmes; • Essential skills numeracy programmes; • Basic digital skills programmes; • Pre-employability skills. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. A joint strategy for Essential Skills will be developed in line with national guidance to improve the number of people enrolling on the programme as well as to improve the completion and attainment outcome rates. 3. Further develop links with GP practices, the Council’s Public Health and Protection Service and the Local Health Board Coordinators to 	<p>RCT Adult Education Service</p>	<p>There will be an improvement in the self-esteem and confidence of customers who engage with our programmes.</p> <p>An improvement in individual skills and qualifications.</p> <p>There will be an improvement in the health and well-being of people participating in learning programme.</p>

**Rhondda, Cynon, Taf - Employment and Skills Action Plan
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		<p>establish a programme of courses in partnership with GPs to promote well-being and improve mental health.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Work with public sector and third sector community hubs to sign-post learners onto appropriate provision within local communities as appropriate. 5. Progression pathways onto accredited further/higher learning to be developed with FE and other partners in line with learner needs. 6. Work with relevant partners to expand Welsh-medium provision for adults. 7. Consultation to be undertaken with learners, employers and the wider community to identify future learner needs and to support co-production of programmes where appropriate. 8. Evaluation of programmes to be undertaken by relevant delivery partners and learner views considered when programmes are being further developed. 9. A variety of promotion and marketing activities to be undertaken to ensure that residents are aware of the breadth of provision available and how to access it, with a specific emphasis on social media but retaining more traditional means to ensure that no-one is excluded from the messages. 		
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		<p>10. All partners to ensure that their provision meets Estyn's requirements as outlined in the Common Inspection Framework for adult community learning.</p> <p>11. ACL partners to work together to support a smooth transition from the current funding and delivery arrangements to the planned changes from September 2020.</p>		
		<p><u>Provision for youth</u></p> <p>1. The Youth Engagement and Participation Service will continue to provide effective guidance to young people making post-16 decisions regarding further education, employment or training through one-to-one support.</p> <p>2. Provision for youth will be mapped so that there is a good understanding of what is available, who is delivering the provision and whether there are any gaps that need to be filled to ensure that young people have access to the right support at the right time and in the right place.</p> <p>3. Provision for development of skills in a range of subject areas will continue to be delivered at youth clubs across the county. These range</p>	<p>YEPS</p> <p>YEPS</p>	<p>Planning will be based on evidence and resources used effectively to maximise impact.</p> <p>There will be an improvement in the young people's confidence, self-</p>

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		<p>from animation and coding to woodwork, food hygiene and construction.</p> <p>4. Accreditation opportunities which link with the new school curriculum will continue to be offered.</p> <p>5. Encouragement to further develop reading skills will be provided through initiatives with the Library Service including the Summer Reading Challenge, and volunteering opportunities will continue to be available through this programme.</p> <p>6. Continue to deliver the ESF-funded Inspire 2 Work programme for young people aged 16-24 years and offer a varied experience of learning and personal development for young people including specific programmes for Children Looked After.</p> <p>7. Continue to deliver the ESF-funded CfW (Priority 3) 1-1 mentoring support programme for young people aged 16-24 years who are NEET. The programme also offers opportunities to access free training courses through the WG commissioned ACT programme and provides support to overcome financial barriers to employment e.g. ID, transport, childcare, interview clothing.</p>	<p>YEPS</p> <p>Library Service</p> <p>RCT Adult Education Service / EET Team</p> <p>CfW</p> <p>CfW+</p>	<p>esteem and employability prospects.</p> <p>Improvement in literacy skills.</p> <p>More people will benefit from good-quality work experience opportunities.</p> <p>More young people will be supported to enter employment.</p>
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<p>and stay in employment</p>	<p>to support people to address barriers to employment and personal development.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Work in partnership to ensure that young people are supported with travel training opportunities through a package of theory and practical work sessions. 3. Continue to offer support for young people to encourage progression through the Careers Wales Tier 5 model and this includes young people on EOTAS provision, Year 11, Year 12 and Year 13 leavers and those who have not secured a destination post school. 4. Develop a package of support for young people with mental health issues and those at risk of becoming homeless. 5. Offer support for young parents to adjust to parenthood and support with future access to employment, education and training. 6. Continue to deliver the ESF-funded CfW employment support programmes (Priority 1 and 3) for people aged 16+. The programmes offer opportunities to access free training courses through the WG commissioned ACT programme and provides support to overcome financial barriers to employment e.g. ID, transport, childcare, interview clothing. 7. Continue to deliver the WG funded CfW+ employment support programme across RCT offering 1-1 mentoring for people aged 16+, 	<p>YEPS</p> <p>YEPS</p> <p>YEPS</p> <p>YEPS</p> <p>CfW/CfW+</p>	<p>customers who engage with our programmes.</p> <p>More in-work support will be available to people once they have entered employment.</p>
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**Rhondda, Cynon, Taf - Employment and Skills Action Plan
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		<p>who are not eligible for support through any other service or grant funded programme.</p> <p>The programme will also include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • access to training opportunities as outlined under Adult Community Learning above; • sourcing local work placement opportunities for clients as part of their pathway to progressing into employment; • a programme of in work support to clients to help sustain their employment and to people at risk of or are in poverty who want to increase their hours of work or upskill; • support to overcome financial barriers to employment e.g. ID, transport, childcare, interview clothing; • a range of local engagement opportunities for people who are furthest away from the labour market and not yet ready to look for employment or access accredited learning. Local engagement plans are developed quarterly with delivery partners and are based on locally identified needs; • a programme of commissioned employment support activity i.e. work clubs. 	<p>More volunteering opportunities will be available.</p> <p>More people will benefit from good-quality work experience opportunities.</p>
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targets for 2019/20: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 900 people engaged - 350 into employment - 450 gaining a vocational qualification - 100 completing a work trial, placement or volunteering opportunity - 75 referrals into other (employment support provision) 3 Plan collaboratively with partners for the impact of the ending of ESF employment programmes by exploring innovative ways in which employment support and provision can be maintained. 4 Plan for the impact of Welsh Government grant-funding changes to the CfW+ employment support programme/Legacy fund from March 2021. 		
	<p>Work with employers to prepare people for current and future vacancies and provide on-going support once an individual has gained employment.</p>	<p>1. Continue to expand relationships with employers who have vacancies and develop bespoke programmes to train unemployed people and those who are economically inactive to access these vacancies. The following sectors to be prioritised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and social care; • Administration; 	CfW+	<p>More people will benefit from good-quality work experience opportunities.</p> <p>More people will be supported to enter employment.</p>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industrial cleaning; • Internal council vacancies, including leisure and horticultural. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Continue to employ an Employer Liaison Officer to engage with employers and identify suitable options for work experience and volunteering to upskill residents. 3. Work closely with the Regeneration and Prosperity Service to identify areas where employers are developing their businesses so that skills development programmes can be implemented with partners to prepare residents to fill those vacancies. 4. Work with partners to assess how much support is available for individuals once they have gained employment with a view to enhancing what is on offer if resources can be identified. 5. Ensure that teams have a good understanding of the current and future skills needs of the area and make use of the data available, for example through the Regional Skills Partnership and Data Cymru, to plan for the delivery of relevant learning and skills programmes as well as for the up-skilling of service staff. 		<p>More in-work support will be available to people once they have entered employment.</p>
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**Rhondda, Cynon, Taf - Employment and Skills Action Plan
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		6. Analyse the outcomes of the extended Community Benefits pilot and assess whether it offers opportunities to support access to skills and, if so, identify a process by which this can be facilitated in line with business needs.	Community Development Service	
Page 126	Encourage and influence employers to take positive action and promote equality for disabled people when recruiting, selecting, managing and developing staff.	<p>1. Work with colleagues within the Council and external partners to raise awareness of the ESF project – Building Resilience, Prosperity and Wellbeing that will deliver, among other things, individual and organisational support to enable people with disabilities or work-limiting health conditions to return to work and provide advice on development of Equality and Diversity policies.</p> <p>2. Implement the Gateway to Employment programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 young people with additional learning needs on placement with the council; • Supported placements in partnership with Coleg Y Cymoedd. 	RCT HR EET team	<p>More opportunities will be available for people who have a disability or long-term health condition to re-enter or sustain employment.</p> <p>Customer satisfaction with the level of support offered will be increased.</p> <p>Job coaches providing support for YP and managers.</p>
	Those who want to progress in work are able to benefit from opportunities to further develop their	Work with employers to promote opportunities for progression, personal development and career enhancement	1. Work with Council services and our wider network of partners to identify training that is available to employed people and highlight this to employers for example essential skills training, Welsh language skills, health and safety etc.	Community Services

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<p>skills and gain promotion.</p>		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Upskill existing employees under the apprenticeship qualification frameworks. 3. Continue to invest in staff skills to ensure that the workforce has the level of expertise required to adapt to changing needs. 4. Continue to offer opportunities for staff to develop youth work qualifications and continue to roll out the volunteering programme to encourage an uptake in young people deciding on youth work as a viable career. 	<p>EET team</p> <p>Community Services</p> <p>YEPS</p>	<p>An increase in skills and career progression opportunities.</p>
<p>There is access to training and learning throughout a person's life as a commitment to lifelong learning is essential for prosperity</p>	<p>Work with local communities to identify the learning and skills needs of their residents.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work undertaken to map the learning and skills needs of the 10 planned Neighbourhood Network areas in RCT will be gathered as they are developed with a focus for 2019/20 on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yr Hwb (Ferndale) • Canolfan Pennar (Mountain Ash) • Porth 2. Information will be shared with partners in order to support their planning, for example the ACL's adult community curriculum. 3. Each Neighbourhood Network will publicise the availability of support and programmes to wider community members, taking feedback 	<p>RCT Community Development</p>	<p>Collaboration across training and advice provider organisations will increase, and better use made of limited resources.</p> <p>Resources will be targeted at the areas of highest need.</p> <p>Customer satisfaction with the level of support offered will be increased.</p> <p>People are able to access more learning</p>

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		<p>from the community in relation to learning needs, and influencing provision.</p> <p>4. CfW+ will continue to provide a range of local engagement and training opportunities for people who are furthest away from the labour market and not yet ready to look for employment or access accredited learning. Local engagement plans are developed quarterly with delivery partners and are based on locally identified needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targets for 2019/20: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 843 people feel more positive about their mental wellbeing – 69 people with increased physical activity – 170 people gain basic ICT/Digital skills – 314 people know how to access help and support (information and advice) – 196 people feel part of the community – 176 young people know how to access help and support (information and advice) – 110 young people feel part of the community <p>5. Community Insights and Value software will be shared and used to support funding applications to address evidenced need.</p>	<p>opportunities in their local communities.</p>
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		<p>6. A Learner Voice consultation will be undertaken to gather and assess the feedback from learners on their experiences of engaging with learning and skills programmes, and the feedback used to inform future developments.</p>		
	<p>Deliver employability support and access to community learning at local venues including community hubs across the county.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintain delivery of CfW and CfW+ provision at 13 key community centres across the county. 2. Continue to offer access to community learning and employability support at all libraries as well as free use of rooms to training provider partners for delivery of their programmes. 3. Assess the needs of each Neighbourhood Network area prior to the establishment of community hubs mapping the level of provision available and the most appropriate place for delivery to ensure access to community-based provision within each area. 	<p>Community Development</p>	<p>Easy access to community-based programmes at local venues.</p>

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RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

17th DECEMBER 2019

MAXIMISING COMMUNITY BENEFITS TRIAL REPORT

JOINT REPORT OF DIRECTOR PUBLIC HEALTH, PROTECTION AND COMMUNITY SERVICES AND DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES IN DISCUSSIONS WITH CLLR. RHYS LEWIS, CABINET MEMBER FOR STRONGER COMMUNITIES, WELL-BEING AND CULTURAL SERVICES

Author: Lowri John, Community Development Officer – 01443 281188

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide Members with information about the work that has been undertaken on maximising Community Benefits and present the findings of a 6 month trial.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- 2.1 Approve the inclusion of Community Benefits Clauses in all relevant corporate contracts. This could either be in the form of direct work to be delivered within the community and/or a financial contribution to a 'legacy fund' (please refer to 2.2 below).
- 2.2 Approve the establishment of a 'Legacy Investment Fund' that will receive the financial contributions generated through Community Benefits to support wider Community Development activities across the County Borough, in line with this Council's corporate priorities.
- 2.3 Commit the resource necessary to continue developments, co-ordinate and mainstream the approach.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 During the trial period, March 2019 – September 2019, 41 contracts valued from £75,000 - £1,000,000+ included a new Community Benefits method statement in the Invitation to Tender (ITT) document. The pilot found that there is a willingness by organisations to:

a) Submit a Community Benefits response in contracts valued below Welsh Government's threshold of £1million for the inclusion of Community Benefits and;

b) Opt for the 'Legacy Investment Fund' option to support wider community development across Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT).

3.2 The introduction of a financial contribution to a Legacy Investment Fund, as a Community Benefit option, provides an opportunity for the Council to manage a fund that would support community development initiatives at a time when resources are under pressure.

4. BACKGROUND

4.1 Community Benefits or Social Clauses are contractual requirements which deliver wider social benefits in addition to the core purpose of a contract. These clauses can be used to build a range of social, economic or environmental conditions into contract delivery.

4.2 Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council's Generating Wealth Board (now stood down) agreed that a resource should be identified to research options and co-ordinate developments that would potentially maximise community benefits derived from procurement contracts. Accordingly, a Graduate Officer post was created in October 2017.

4.3 The Graduate Officer's principal function was to explore options for maximising Community Benefits.

4.4 Following extensive research and consultation with key internal and external stakeholders, crucially including current and potential contract holders, it became apparent that there was further scope and opportunities for RCT CBC to capitalise on, and maximise the impact of Community Benefits Clauses.

4.5 Opportunities explored included, but were not restricted to:

- Introducing a financial contribution (voluntarily or mandatory);
- A range of capital works such as construction, repair maintenance; and
- The provision of goods and services.

4.6 A variety of organisations in Wales utilise financial contributions as part of their community benefits clauses in the following ways:

- Regenerating local playing parks and community spaces;
- Facilitating training and learning opportunities;
- Providing support to Community Groups;
- Engaging communities in community development.

- 4.7 Currently, construction contracts valued over £1million such as the 21st Century Schools developments and Taff Vale re-development project are procured via the South East & Mid Wales Collaborative Construction Framework (SEWSCAP). In order to gain a place on the framework, contractors are required to prepare a detailed Community Benefits plan discussing their commitment and approach to the delivery of Community Benefits. The primary onus for the delivery of these commitments therefore lies with the contractor. The same principle applies to contracts/projects procured via our South East Wales Highways Framework (SEWH). RCT has minimal influence over the delivery/implementation of Community Benefits in framework contracts.
- 4.8 Broadening the scope of contracts to include Community Benefits and committing a resource to lead developments will enable the Council to influence the delivery of Community Benefits outside of frameworks, thus ensuring that local and strategically identified priorities and needs are met.
- 4.9 Last year it was recommended that the Graduate Officer, who has been responsible for leading developments to date, draft an issue report for consideration. Upon analysis and reflection it was identified that there were too many 'unknowns' about the proposed recommendations.
- 4.10 The implementation of a trial was therefore deemed the best course of action to proceed whereby tangible outcomes could be reported, scrutinised and used to inform wider RCT CBC policy developments in respect of Community Benefits. It was designed to test the willingness of tenderers to commit to making a financial contribution to a Legacy Investment Fund and/or to commit to another form of contribution as part of their Community Benefits response.

5. THE COMMUNITY BENEFITS PILOT

- 5.1 This pilot focussed on contracts valued from £75,000 - £1,000,000+. £75,000 was decided as the lowest benchmark figure in line with this Council's Contract Procedure Rules (CPR).
- 5.2 It focussed on RCT only contracts, excluding collaborative frameworks with other Local Authorities.
- 5.3 The percentage of financial contribution applied to individual contracts was implemented on a sliding scale basis (information below), dependent on contract value. Only the percentage that was applicable to a contract was detailed in the ITT documents. The proposed scaling noted below was decided following consultation with the Corporate Procurement Unit (CPU), Newydd Housing Association and Newport City Council (Appendix A&B) who currently have a financial contribution,

as a Community Benefits option embedded in their procurement processes.

<i>Contract Value (up to max)</i>	<i>Percentage %</i>
<i>£75,000 - £500,000</i>	<i>1.00%</i>
<i>£500,000 - £750,000</i>	<i>0.75%</i>
<i>£750,000 – 1,000,,000</i>	<i>0.50%</i>
<i>£1,000,000+</i>	<i>0.25%</i>

5.4 Of the 41 awarded contracts:

- 25 contractors/organisations submitted a Community Benefits Response (61%);
- 16 contractors/organisations opted to contribute towards a voluntary financial contribution – ‘Legacy Investment Fund’ (39%);
- It is anticipated that the sum to be realised will be between approximately £20,000 - £23,000 (based on short term contracts not including the re-occurring payments on longer term contracts);
- 8 contractors/organisations provided an offer for work experience placements (20%);
- 7 contractors/organisations provided an offer to support ‘Other’ methods of Community Benefits (mock interviews, engagement with schools, guest speakers & mentoring) (17%);
- 2 contractors provided in kind donations totalling £450 (Appendix C).

5.5 It should be stressed that tender documentation made it clear that commitment to a Community Benefits contribution was voluntary and would not be considered as part of the assessment of the tender. It is pleasing to note therefore the readiness of tenderers to contribute.

6. ISSUES RAISED

6.1 **Issue** - How and to what extent organisations build in Community Benefits costs into their overall pricing model & how potentially the

implementation of a financial contribution would simply be added onto the final contract cost.

- 6.2 **Outcome** - The trial has not evidenced an increase in contract costs as anticipated. Awarded organisations & contractors (within the trial period) who submitted a community benefits response either submitted the Most Economically Advantageous Tender (MEAT) or tendered the lowest price. Out of the 41 responses, 16 (39%) opted to contribute towards the 'Legacy Investment Fund'.
- 6.3 **Unexpected Outcome** - In addition to the above, an unforeseen development was that contract holders below the trial boundaries of £75,000, came forward to engage in the financial contribution option (as low as £38,125).
- 6.4 It is recommended that the 'Legacy Investment Fund' be approved and monies be allocated to support wider Community Development activities across the County Borough.
- 6.5 The pilot focus and success was based on contractors understanding that the LIF would contribute towards local Community Development and as such, to do otherwise would undermine the pilot findings and potentially reduce contributions.

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Whilst an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has not been required for this report, approval of the recommendations noted would positively impact upon local communities and residents.
- 7.2 Local community developments would be inclusive and communities and residents alike would have access to opportunities that ordinarily may not have been available/possible.

8. CONSULTATION

- 8.1 As indicated in section 4.4, the Graduate Officer undertook consultation with key internal and external stakeholders, crucially including current and potential contract holders and local businesses, the results of which are attached (Appendix D).
- 8.2 This consultation was undertaken early on in the Graduate Officer's post before this trial was undertaken. Lessons learnt from the consultation encouraged the Graduate Officer to change some terminology for the Pilot i.e. 'Financial Levy' to 'Financial Contribution'. This was to emphasise that this Council wants to work collaboratively with organisations on a voluntary and not mandatory basis.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 If the recommendations are approved the necessary capacity to implement this policy will be identified from within existing resources.

10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 10.1 There are no legal implications aligned to this report as Community Benefits and the option of contributing to the 'Legacy Investment Fund' remains voluntary.

11. LINKS TO THE CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT

- 11.1 The Council's three main priorities currently are Economy, People and Place. The Community Benefits agenda actively supports these priorities by seeking to deliver the widest economic, social and environmental benefits. Introducing the 'Legacy Investment Fund' could enhance the reach of these benefits throughout the County Borough.

- 11.2 This proposal is consistent with the Sustainable Development Principle promoted by the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act through the five ways of working:

- Long-term – Community Benefits will seek to achieve long term sustainable change and impact positively on communities and for residents throughout the County Borough;
- Prevention – The Community Benefits initiative makes a significant contribution to Welsh Government's ambition for jobs, growth and tackling poverty in Wales;
- Integration – The Community Benefits initiative actively contributes and supports RCT CBC's well-being objectives and strategic priorities derived from the Corporate Plan and Procurement Strategy;
- Collaboration – Intrinsic to the Community Benefits approach is the collaboration between RCT CBC, businesses, suppliers, contractors, communities and residents;
- Involvement – Communities and residents will be involved by utilising the opportunities made available by Community Benefits. Businesses have been involved in developments through consultation.

- 11.3 This proposal makes a direct contribution to the seven national well-being goals, in particular a prosperous Wales, a resilient Wales, a healthier Wales, a more equal Wales and a globally responsible Wales.

- A Prosperous Wales – Creating opportunities for work experience, volunteering & jobs, developing a skilled and well-educated population;
- A Resilient Wales – Investing in and valuing our Green Spaces;
- A Healthier Wales – Supporting local community development initiatives & community facilities to enable people to stay active and more independent in the community;
- A more Equal Wales – Facilitating employment and digital opportunities to all our residents to improve their skills enabling people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstance;
- A Globally responsible Wales – Working together to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Rhondda Cynon Taf.

11.4 The Council has statutory commitments with regards to the Welsh Language under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011, specifically the Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015. These regulations specify standards with regards to promoting and facilitating the Welsh language and ensuring the Welsh Language is treated no less favourably than the English language in all of the Council's service delivery, policy and operational responsibilities. Any Community Benefits integrated into the procurement process must consider the language.

12. CONCLUSION

12.1 Time is of the essence. Nationally, the Social Value agenda is growing and gaining momentum rapidly. Concepts of social impact and return are growing in visibility and are becoming more broadly embedded in decision making at various levels. This report evidences that there is scope to further enhance this Council's approach to the implementation and delivery of Community Benefits. Local and strategic needs can be addressed and met through this agenda.

12.2 Internally within this Council, arrangements have been put in place within our procurement and contracting processes to enable developments to continue without disruption, subject to further direction and guidance. A continued voluntary approach to Community Benefits is recommended whereby Community Benefits should not be scored, weighted or have any bearing on any decision of the tendering and evaluation processes.

12.3 Failure to address & capitalise on these opportunities now will inevitably result in the need to focus our attention on this matter in the very near future.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

17th DECEMBER 2019

**JOINT REPORT OF DIRECTOR PUBLIC HEALTH, PROTECTION AND
COMMUNITY SERVICES AND DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES IN
DISCUSSIONS WITH CLLR. RHYS LEWIS, CABINET MEMBER FOR
STRONGER COMMUNITIES, WELL-BEING AND CULTURAL SERVICES**

MAXIMISING COMMUNITY BENEFITS TRIAL REPORT

Background Papers

- Newydd Housing Association – Financial Contribution Approach
- Newport City Council – Financial Contribution Approach
- Community Benefits Snap Survey Results
- Pictures from Cheque Handover to First Llantrisant Brownies

Officer to contact: Lowri John, Community Development Officer – Tel:
01443 281188

Appendix A

Newydd Housing Association – Financial Contribution Approach

- ‘Community Investment Sum’ - “The CIS is a sum of money to be paid by the contractor or supplier to Newydd for the purpose of community development activities. These monies will be held within the Community Regeneration team’s budget and will be invested by Newydd at our absolute discretion.” – This money must be spent in the area where it was generated.
- All procured contracts under £50,000 are expected to submit a community investment sum or deliver 1 or more activities detailed in the i2i Community Benefits Menu of Options.
- CIS percentage is utilised on a sliding scale dependent on contract value. The Community Regeneration Manager has the flexibility to negotiate the CIS using the table below **as a guide**.

Contract Value (up to max)	CIS percentage %	CIS Monetary Value (minimum required)
£50,000	2.00%	£1,000
£100,000	1.50%	£1,500
£250,000	1.00%	£2,500
£500,000	0.75%	£3,750
£1,000,000	0.50%	£5,000
£1,000,000 +	0.25%	£5,000+

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Appendix B

Newport City Council - Financial Contribution Approach

- *An option for a contractor to commit to the delivery of community benefit, is to engage with the Legacy Programme; this sees a successful contractor, recharge 0.5% of total contract value into the Work Based Learning Academy (WBLA).*
- *The recharge will then be used to increase the impact of the community benefit, far beyond the timeframe or geography of the contract, and to a much wider demographic of people, seeking employment, training and new skills.*

Delivery

- *A sum of money would be deposited to WBLA cost code by each contractor to spend wholly on community benefits, known as the Legacy programme Recharge.*
- *The sum would be calculated as 0.5% of the contract value and would be deposited in one payment, in the first quarter of the contract start date.*
- *On a £1m scheme this would equate to a Legacy Programme Recharge of £5000.*
- *It is deposited within Community Regenerations finance Department to be used at clients' discretion.*
- *Contractors would be wholly engaged with the PR process to whatever extent they require and would also be fully supported by The WBLA and wider Council PR team ensuring that any publicity is maximised for both parties.*

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Appendix C

Photos of Cheque Handover to the First Llantrisant Brownies



Graduate Officer Maximising Community Benefits handover of £200 cheque (Contractor - Cladright Industrial Roofing & Cladding)



Graduate Officer Maximising Community Benefits handover of £200 cheque (Contractor - Cladright Industrial Roofing & Cladding)

DRAFT

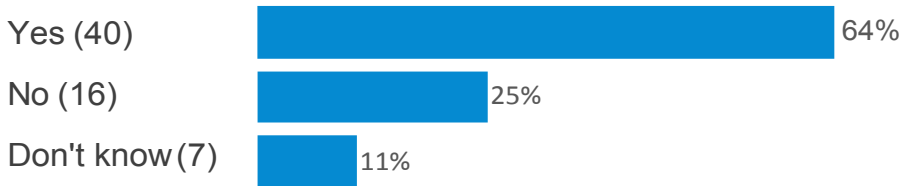
Appendix D

Maximising Community Benefits – Snap Survey

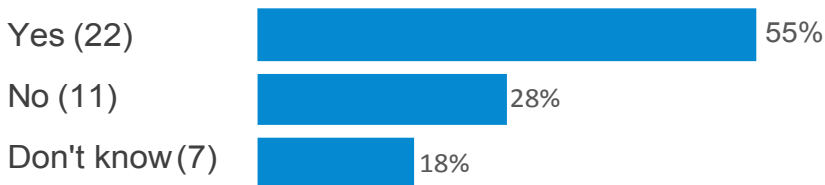
Community Benefits Questionnaire

This report was generated on 09/05/18. Overall 63 respondents completed this questionnaire. The report has been filtered to show the responses for 'All Respondents'.

Q1 Do you currently hold a contract with Rhondda Cynon Taf Council?



Q2 If yes, does your contract have Community Benefits incorporated in to it?



Q3 If no, have you had any other experiences of delivering a contract that included Community Benefits?



If yes, please detail:

Test

As [REDACTED] provides training and employment opportunities for people with [REDACTED] including direct employment within its [REDACTED] unit, then all our contracts and our inclusion with a supply chain as a subcontractor to fulfil a larger contract delivers community benefits. Consequently, any opportunity to be involved in procurement contract supply chains would bring the community benefits of supporting and sustaining the employment of our [REDACTED] workforce. [REDACTED] currently supplies to [REDACTED] which also bring the added environmental community benefit as well as being in

the [REDACTED] supply chain

We have carried out volunteering work for communities and provided materials for community groups to use. We have accommodated work experience roles and as a Welsh SME deliver a positive local benefit.

Most [REDACTED] carry a Community Benefit Clause to help the Community. Our contract with RCT is for

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] is a supplier on the [REDACTED]. We supply [REDACTED] equipment, to enable people with [REDACTED] to live independently [REDACTED].

We are part of a number of frameworks including a [REDACTED] which involves the delivery of Community Benefits

I am currently working as a [REDACTED] with [REDACTED] delivering our Community Benefits. We are currently partnering with [REDACTED] to deliver a new [REDACTED] in

Working together will allow us to maximise the projects potential allowing our communities to benefit with a legacy where we are building [REDACTED]. Its important for us to make a social impact in communities not just create [REDACTED]. We want people to be proud of their

communities and grow together.

We are an [REDACTED] and we generally get invovled with delivering community beenfits via contracts that our constructor partners are on.

[REDACTED] recruitment of employees from their volunteer scheme. We have recruited 3 people so far

We are a [REDACTED] that strives to lower the total cost of [REDACTED] for Public Sector organisations such as Local Authorities through [REDACTED]. Across the U.K we have a small number of clients where we get involved with Community Benefits.

We have submitted as part of our tender with other local authorities but to date no one has never taken it up, but as a company we all have 15hrs volunteer time per year which enables

any of our staff to be involved in giving something back to the community.

We have undertaken work for [REDACTED], projects for to name but a few.

Yes, drafted them for the [REDACTED] and have had many years experience in deploying them on public sector and some private sector construction contracts

We are a [REDACTED] to RCTCBC and other Welsh Local Authorities as a [REDACTED] [REDACTED], includes Community Benefit initiatives. We also provide similar for numerous of our under

Constriction contracts

Q4 RCT Council is currently considering changing their approach to Community Benefits, to maximise the benefits for residents. Would you support a more flexible approach to the development / implementation of Community Benefits in RCT?

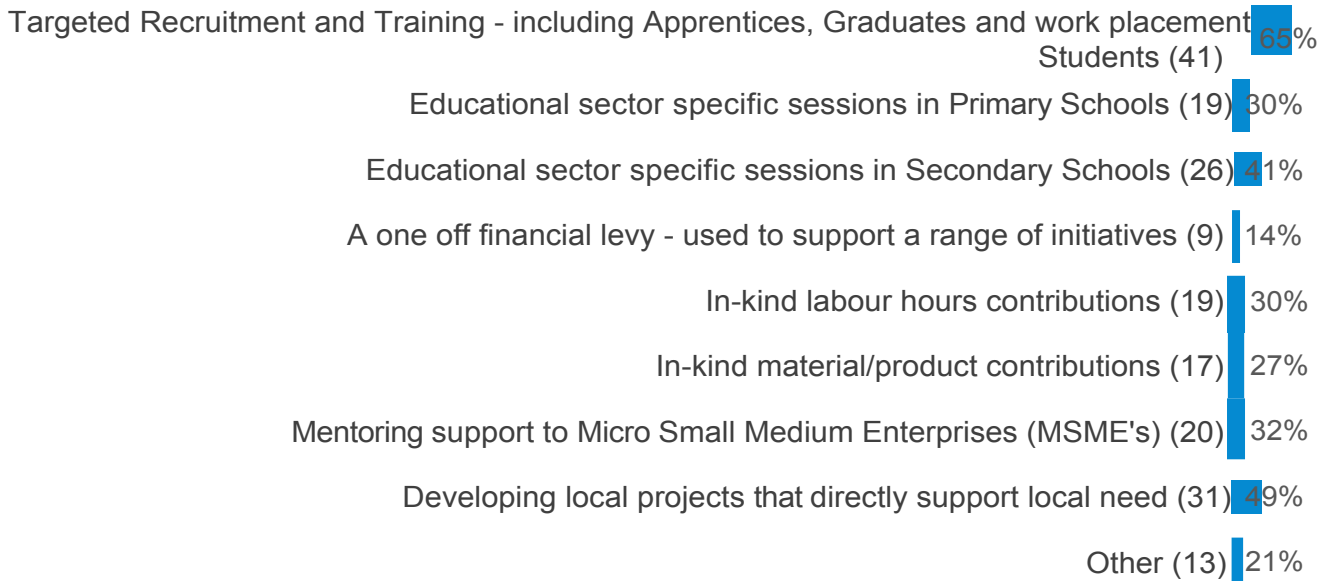


If no, please tell us why:

Our contract is for the provision of [REDACTED], our community benefits are [REDACTED] based

due to the nature of the services provided under this contract we are not able to provide Community Benefits outside of [REDACTED].

Q5 Which Community Benefits would you be more inclined to support? (Please tick all that apply)



Please state 'other'

Any test

The question does not apply to us as we are a

Utilisation of reserved contracts and the specifying supported businesses/SEs in supply chains We deal with construction and try where possible to purchase locally and use local labour Social prescribing

We have offered to provide financial support to 'children in need' on a 'one off' basis.

Charity initiatives

We are open to ALL suggestions / consultation in delivering something of value & benefit Educational sessions in Colleges / Higher & Further education

Out of School Childcare

Spending money on seminars/conferences within RCT so that that revenue goes to local businesses. Low cost childcare using [REDACTED] to aid community engagement

Representatives [REDACTED], contribution to any RCT Council strategic initiatives

**Q6 Are you aware of the support available in RCT Council to develop/implement
Community Benefits?**



Q7 If yes, if you receive help/are aware, please detail who you would contact for help:

N/A

Procurement

Procurement

[Redacted] (Procurement) [Redacted] >

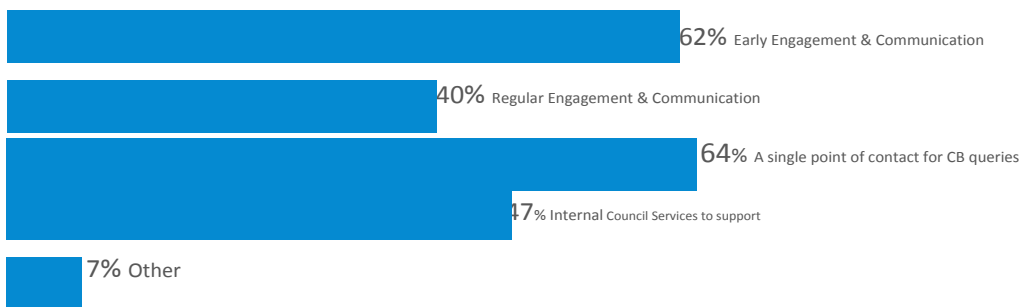
We have worked with the Employment, Education & Training Team and also Inspire to Work initiatives

We were given a link when we started the contract but all they seem to do is to collect stats. We have had no assistance with recruitment through the community benefits only through the

section that our contract is with.

Corporate Estates

Q8 If no, what type of help would you like to receive in relation to the development/implementation? (Please tick all that apply)



Please state 'other'

All test

An opportunity to market abilities to the council to secure contracts and inclusion in supply chains

none

A similar arrangement to the Cardiff Commitment could be utilised.

Q9 If RCT Council provided increased publicity acknowledging your contribution to Community Benefits, would this be of interest to your company/organisation?

Yes (55) [Redacted] 87%

No (8) [Redacted] 13%

If yes, please tell us why;

Test -

We always welcome good publicity and an improved public image and would be pleased for any community benefits we undertake to be advertised by RCTCBC.

Whilst undertaking community Benefit programs is rewarding, ethical and inline with our company polices, to have our involvement recognised by others in the community would also have an impact on the branding of the company and its perception within the local community.

ultimately this may lead to increased enquires to us as a business.

Then we would be truly collaborating as partners, at present all the effort & commitment comes from [REDACTED], with minimal work by RCT officers.

Inclusion of [REDACTED] in supply chains will inherently deliver community community benefits for the council and support the employment of our [REDACTED] workforce, so any publicity that helps

inform potential prime contractors of our services will provide more opprtunity to be included in supply chains.

Recognition

Good publicity can only be good. We already carry out community benefit work but no one would be aware of this.

Positive PR around this is always helpful. We recently completed a scheme in [REDACTED] and 57% of 'work/ went to local contractors; 23% of the materials was purchased locally and 6% was spent on local accommodation - out of a £4.5m project.75 jobs created of which 65% were local people

to help promote our company

It might help us with marketing messages.

It would help us evaluate our impact in terms of social value and outcomes relating to community wellbeing

As a business we get a level of publicity and feedback for our contribution, increasing our business value and visibility within a community.

Raising awareness of the impact our services have will increase local take up, further increasing community benefit.

..

To gain a better understanding and be able to share this information with service users.

Assists in raising awareness of the charity as well as promoting community benefits it is an extra incentive and free marketing for our organisation

The Community would be more aware of our contribution to the community.

Working together in a more joined up approach will make a bigger impact on communities whilst delivering Community Benefits. We currently utilise out contractors, development partners and external stakeholders to deliver projects with the community using employee volunteering hours.

We have a role to play in the community, and should be viewed more positively by the Council. It might also help reduce the stigma around [REDACTED] for young people.

As we operate in a fiercely competitive market (construction) we would need support and recognition to make the time required on community benefit initiatives sustainable where margins are so low.

In order to increase the profile of our organisation and help attract candidates.

We are keen for our business to have a positive effect and contribution on local communities and would see that publicly acknowledging this could be beneficial to us for demonstrating to other authorities what we do when tendering for other work.

Opportunities for co-promotional activities.

Because the council must appreciate that there is a cost to providing this benefit. If that cost can be offset to some degree by advertising and P.R. benefit it will go some way to justifying the expense.

Positive marketing for the company, and validation of our commitment to community benefits

As the umbrella organisation of [REDACTED] across Wales and working under an [REDACTED] RCT, we would welcome promotion of the work we do around community benefits

Ability to showcase what our company is completing within the local community - Show local benefits within the local community - Advertise jobs locally - Recruit locally

To develop awareness of the importance of food and nutrition

More visibility for community which will lead to better buy in from local people

We would like to take every opportunity to link with the communities in RCT so would appreciate any publicity that would encourage this.

It is always good to receive acknowledgement for contributions made towards the local economy. To promote our brand as a stakeholder that adds value to the residents of RCT CBC.

To show the support that RCT would get from local firms to show partnership in giving back to the community

Any community benefit would enhance living and working within RCT

We feel we meet community demand but are often ignored due to misconceptions about the value of not for profit groups. We believe the low cost [REDACTED] would benefit community cohesion about we do not have the capability to engage the community in the way we would

like. In addition, links to suitable funding programmes for new developments would be off advantage

We feel that it is an important part of the process to share these experiences so that other Councils can learn from them, Education facilities can see they are available, the positive response motivates our staff to want to do more and it improves community engagement.

Provides greater awareness and publicity of success stories

It is a useful demonstration of successful implementation of Community Benefit initiatives and the types of involvement we are able to contribute to.

We are working in partnership with Rhondda Cynon Taf Council [REDACTED] Any increased awareness and/or publicity attaching to an individual council - or the group as a

whole - would be mutually beneficial.

Businesses/schools etc. would become aware of what we are able to offer (It would also be good for RCT to be shown to be using Welsh based companies)

If no, please tell us why:

I do not think this questionnaire is relevant to our company we would much prefer it to be low key

We are happy with the current level of publicity. We are more interested in helping the local communities. Some recognition is always nice to receive but full on publicity is not required.

[REDACTED] business dealings are predominantly from Public Sector Tenders, so although there would be a "quality" advantage in citing supported community benefits, there is unlikely to be any increased business directly from positive publicity.

we work with some very sensitive and vulnerable clients groups so any publicity would need to be carefully managed

it is not applicable to our contract with RCT

Q10 Do you have any comments / ideas / suggestions you would like to add?

Test

The council to identify supported businesses and social enterprises that can deliver products and services that it requires, either through direct contracts or within supply chains, which will deliver community benefits. Utilise reserve and low value contracts to proactively procure products and services directly from supported businesses and social enterprises where possible. Also, include community benefits clauses in all procurement contracts and specify supported businesses and social enterprises that could be used and included within the supply chain of main contractor [REDACTED] is currently working with [REDACTED] to promote this activity

and would welcome the opportunity to discuss the council's initiative with its appropriate representatives.

I think most contractors are happy to supply management and instruction (often the owner/managers personal time) but when the market is so competitive it is increasingly difficult to supply free material and labour. Management time would probably deliver greater benefits as it can lead to greater efficiency and an economic supply chain.

I'm not sure what comes under the scope of "community benefits" within RCT and thus what our opportunities would be to contribute to them. Any project to improve wellbeing or provide beneficial services tends to struggle with understanding local needs and aspirations and current service provision. It would be a great start to have a website listing current community benefits

and a pipeline for future opportunities. It would help to have links to relevant strategies and research, e.g. wellbeing assessment, market analysis, service delivery maps or surveys.

I think the community benefits should not be just for RCT but the wider area of Wales and scored taking that into consideration

We have done numerous engagement presentations in schools and colleges to promote career opportunities in the construction industry but they are predominantly driven by ourselves and our partners. I believe it would be a good idea for RCT to organise events for engineering/construction professionals that they have engaged to visit and present in schools and colleges, especially the ones they are working on.

As a contractor, we would be appreciative on any guidance that may be available as to what other forms of community benefit we might contribute towards - usually for us it is in the form of donations to local schools, charities or organisations or the offer of physical works.

Adult education should also be included as an option. We have spent significant funds and lots of time training [redacted] to be better and more efficient in their work for [redacted] but it is not clearly recognised as community benefits.

We are [redacted] on our [redacted] projects. Some flexibility in TR&T would help, particularly on projects, as we directly employ a lot of labour therefore we want to sustain our local workforce.

New entrant targets are sometimes difficult, when we have existing labour. However on our projects we find the TR&T targets more flexible as we have different trades and are able to use resources from Y Prentis shared apprenticeship scheme and other work placements through initiatives such as Inspire to Work.

None that I would say will make a huge difference Thank you for sending us the survey.

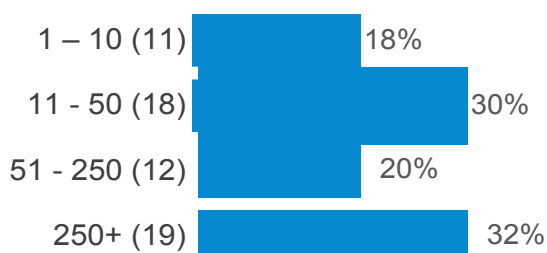
Any way of encouraging communities to take action and become more involved in their communities would be a step in the right direction.

Current CB targets appear relatively straightforward to achieve. Greater flexibility to reflective specific contract needs and local project benefits would be a good way of developing CB further

Q11 Your Company / Organisation's Information

- **Redacted to comply with GDPR**

Q12 What is the size of your business (Number of Employees)



If 250+, please specify how many:

2200

800

500

1737

circa 350

approx 300

820

410

3500

720

90,000

c. 2300

3036

Over 1000

Nationwide, more than

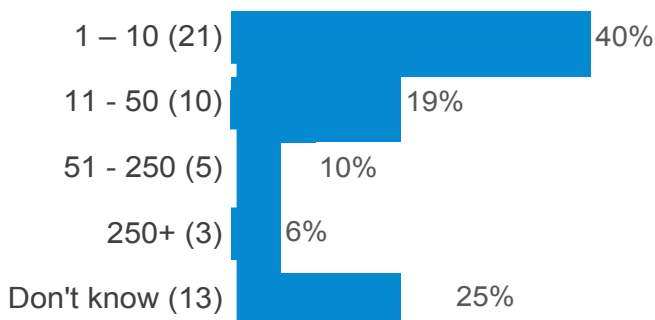
6,000 1100

uk wise 20k

Locally we have an office of 100 employees, globally [REDACTED] has 95,000 employees across 150 countries

c100,000

Q13 How many employees are based in RCT?



If 250+, please specify how many:

0

None

0

None

500

720

None

None of our employees are based in RCT.

Q14 May we have your permission to use your details for:

N.B. Data will only be used for these specific purposes exclusively. (Future correspondence in relation to the development of Community Benefits?)



Q14 May we have your permission to use your details for:

N.B. Data will only be used for these specific purposes exclusively. (To inform you of Business Support the Council may be able to offer in the future?)



DRAFT

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

17TH DECEMBER 2019

REVIEW OF LEARNING SUPPORT CLASS PROVISION FOR PUPILS WITH SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIOURAL DIFFICULTIES (SEBD) AND SIGNIFICANT ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND INCLUSION SERVICES IN DISCUSSION WITH THE CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION AND INCLUSION SERVICES, COUNCILLOR J ROSSER

Author: Ceri Jones – Head of Inclusion Services

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an opportunity to consider proposals for the creation of additional mainstream Learning Support Class (LSC) provision for pupils with Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (SEBD) and Welsh medium LSC provision to support pupils with significant additional learning needs within Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT)

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:

- 2.1 Consider the information contained within this report.
- 2.2 Note the proposals for the creation of three SEBD LSC provisions and one Welsh medium LSC provision to support pupils with significant additional learning needs within the context of the School Organisation Code (2018) and the 21st Century School Modernisation Programme.
- 2.3 Formally approve to commence consultation on the following proposals:
- 2.3.1 To create a new Key Stage 3/4 LSC provision for pupils with SEBD at Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School;
- 2.3.2 To create a new Key Stage 3/4 LSC provision for pupils with SEBD at Ferndale Community School;
- 2.3.3 To create a new Key Stage 3/4 LSC provision for pupils with SEBD at Mountain Ash Comprehensive School;
- 2.3.4 To create a new Key Stage 3/4 LSC provision for pupils with significant Additional Learning Needs (ALN) at Ysgol Garth Olwg.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To progress the proposal in accordance with the process outlined in the School Organisation Code (011/2018) so that an improved continuum of Special Educational Needs (SEN) provision can be achieved in RCT.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Considerable changes are planned in Wales in relation to the statutory provision required to meet the needs of pupils with SEN/additional learning needs (ALN). The Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) (ALNET) Act was introduced in January 2018. The Act requires local authorities to keep under review the arrangements for supporting pupils with ALN within their area and consider whether these are sufficient. This includes a statutory requirement to take all reasonable steps to create a bilingual system of support for pupils with ALN. The Act will be supported by new regulations, including secondary legislation and a new statutory Additional Learning Needs Code. The current draft Code is based on the following principles:

- meeting the needs of pupils with ALN should be part of a whole school approach to school improvement;
- pupils must be supported to participate in mainstream education and in the National Curriculum as fully as possible wherever this is feasible.

- 4.2 Until the anticipated implementation of the new ALN Code in September 2021, Local Authorities (LAs) are required to comply with the existing Special Educational Needs (SEN) Code of Practice for Wales (2002) and fulfil their statutory duties towards children with SEN. The Code states that children and young people have SEN if they have a learning difficulty which calls for a special educational provision to be made for them. Early years settings and schools are required to adopt a graduated response to meeting SEN at Early Years/School Action and Early Year/School Action Plus of the Code of Practice. For learners with the most significant SEN, a Statement of SEN is issued by the Council and statutory provision put in place.

- 4.3 A total of £3.4m Additional Needs Funding (ANF) is available to mainstream schools to ensure statutory mainstream provision for learners is robust and to support mainstream inclusion for learners with severe and persistent needs.

- 4.4 For pupils with more significant needs who experience difficulties in coping with mainstream education, more specialist placements are required. Rhondda Cynon Taf has a range of specialist provisions which includes: 44 LSCs, 2 Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) and 4 Special Schools. These placements are agreed by Access and Inclusion Service panels.

- 4.5 RCT has an excellent range of LSC provisions attached to mainstream schools. However, in light of the requirements of the ALNET Act, concerns regarding rising exclusions and an increase in requests for SEBD placements it is felt

necessary to enhance the current LSC provision to address the above issues. Additionally, schools are reporting increasing levels of learners with mental health and social, emotional and behavioural difficulties in mainstream contexts.

- 4.6 Data analysis confirms that:
- there is currently insufficient SEBD provision in the secondary sector;
 - there is currently no discreet specialist provision for Welsh medium pupils with significant additional learning needs.
- 4.7 In light of these findings, the proposal for change seeks to achieve the following aims:
- to enhance the continuum of provision that effectively addresses the need for specialist SEBD provision within Key Stage 3/4;
 - to create a specialist LSC provision for Welsh medium Key Stage 3/4 pupils with significant ALN.

5. CURRENT POSITION

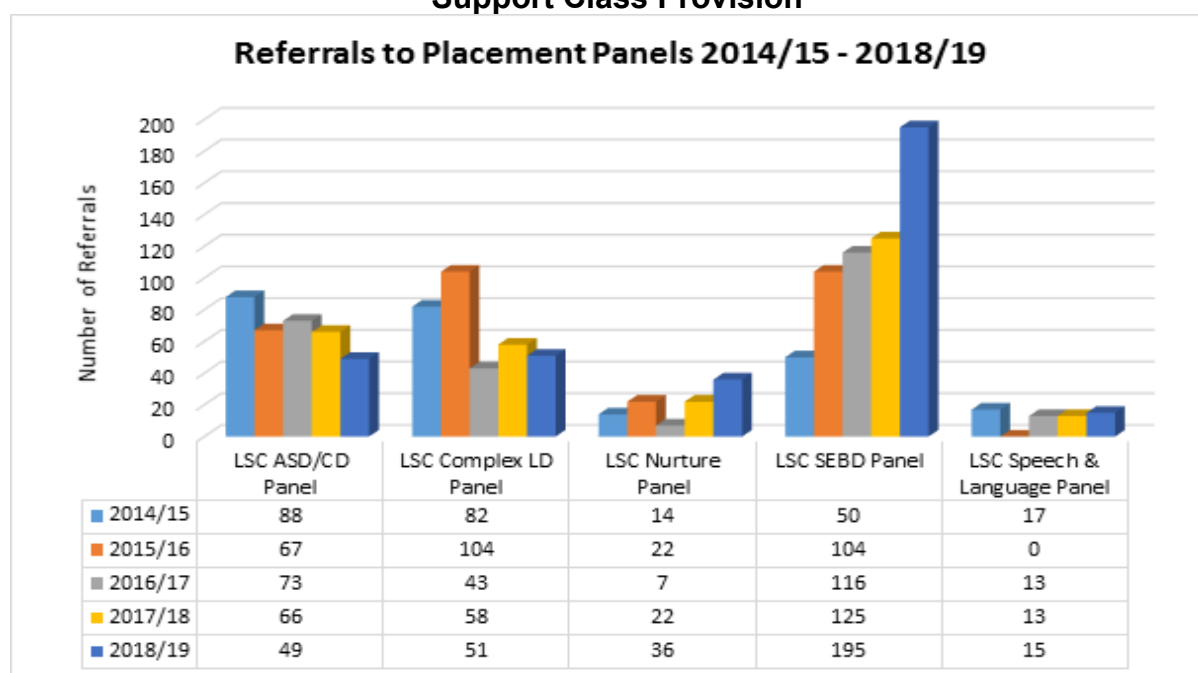
- 5.1 RCT spends in the region of £4.1 million annually on the provision of LSCs. There are currently approximately 362 pupils accessing the 44 LSC provisions within RCT across a range of needs. Table 1 outlines the range of mainstream LSCs currently available:

Table 1: Current Mainstream Learning Support Classes

SEN Learning Support Classes	Foundation Phase (FP) or Key Stage (KS)	Number of classes	Percentage of Overall LSCs
Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD)	FP	5	39%
	KS2	6	
	KS 3 / 4	6	
Complex Learning Difficulties	FP	3	27%
	KS 2	6	
	KS 3 / 4	3	
Hearing Impairment	FP/KS 2	1	2%
Observation & Assessment	FP	1	7%
Early Years Assessment and Intervention	FP	2	
Nurture	FP	2	18%
Social, Emotional & Behavioural Difficulties	KS 2	4	
	KS 3 / 4	2	
Speech and Language Difficulties	FP/KS 2	2	7%
	KS 3 / 4	1	
Total		44	100%

5.2 As can be seen in Table 2 requests for placements within SEBD provision have far exceeded requests for any other specialist LSC provision with an increase of 290% over the last 5 years. Only 37 of the 126 pupils (29.3%) referred to the SEBD specialist placement panel in 2018/19 were awarded a specialist provision.

Table 2: Number of pupils Referred to Placement Panels for Learning Support Class Provision



5.3 Rates of exclusion within RCT have continued to rise over a five year period and both permanent and fixed term exclusions are currently at their highest with 23 permanent exclusions and 2690 fixed term exclusions in 2018/19. Exclusions also impact upon attendance which, in-turn, impacts upon outcomes for this cohort of pupils.

Table 3: Summary of exclusions within the last 5 years (All settings)

Exclusion Data	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	Total
Permanent exclusions	20	4	20	8	23	75
Fixed term exclusions	1683	1532	1948	2229	2690	10082
Number of days lost	4058.5	3284.5	4106	4294	5374.5	21117.5
Average length of exclusion (days)	2.41	2.14	2.11	1.90	2.00	2.11

5.4 In addition, to mainstream settings experiencing a growth in challenging behaviours, the complexity of need within PRU settings has also grown particularly at secondary level. Table 4 reports the significant increase of 632% in the number of fixed term exclusion and a 310% increase in the number of school days lost due to these exclusions with Ty Gwyn Education Centre (the Council's secondary PRU) over a 5 year period.

Table 4: Summary of exclusions within Pupil Referral Units within last 5 years

PRU / Special School Name	Incidents of Exclusion						Days lost due to Exclusion					
	2014 /15	2015 /16	2016 /17	2017 /18	2018 /19	Total	2014 /15	2015 /16	2016 /17	2017 /18	2018 /19	Total
Tai Education Centre	7	10	3	14	7	41	16.5	16.5	6	30	24	93
Ty Gwyn Education Centre	31	66	106	120	227	550	97	202	187.5	211	441.5	1139
Total	38	76	109	134	234	591	113.5	218.5	193.5	241	465.5	1232

5.5 Data would suggest that there are significant changes in the complexity and behaviours of pupils within the secondary PRU setting. There are currently 52 learners in the setting with severe social, emotional and behaviour needs. Ty Gwyn Education Centre is categorised by Central South Consortium as a ‘red’ setting requiring the highest level of school improvement support. The PRU has experienced considerable changes in staffing during 2018/19 which has posed many additional challenges. Tai, the primary PRU, has relatively low rates of exclusion and was judged by Estyn to be excellent in its inspection in June 2019. It is currently categorised as a ‘green’ setting.

5.6 Analysis of behaviour management data submitted by schools has shown that the number of pupils requiring physical intervention has significantly increased in the last 5 years with a rise of 302% in reported incidents.

5.7 It is important to note, however, that the significant increase could be attributed in part to the raised awareness of the safe use of positive physical intervention following the roll out of Team Teach training to schools.

Table 5: Summary of Physical Intervention Data collated within the last 5 years

Behaviour Data	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	Total
Reported use of physical intervention	139	263	273	390	560	681

5.8 Currently Welsh medium pupils with significant additional learning needs who would meet the criteria for LSC provision within English medium settings are supported by a specialist peripatetic team. The team, which includes a Welsh medium specialist teacher and two Learning Support Assistants, provides support through an inclusive delivery model whereby pupils are provided with specialist support within their mainstream settings.

5.9 During the Academic Year 2018/19 the Welsh Complex Needs Team supported 15 pupils with an age range of Year 1 to Year 9 of which:

- 3 attended Foundation Phase

- 5 attended Key Stage 2
- 7 attended Key Stage 3.

5.10 Data analysis suggests that pupils accessing support from the central Welsh Complex Needs Team are making progress that is comparable to that of their peers in English medium LSCs. An evaluation of the above provision in Autumn Term 2019 showed that the above inclusive model adopted in Welsh medium settings has been very positive.

5.11 However, it is concerning to note that due to a lack of Welsh medium LSC provision, 1 pupil had to move from Welsh medium education in 2018/19 and 2 pupils in September 2019/20 in order to access specialist English medium LSC provision. Anecdotally, feedback from schools suggests that some parents of children with ALN sometimes opt to send their children to an English medium school prior to secondary transfer due to the lack of discrete specialist provision in the Welsh medium sector. It is perceived that the level of ALN in the Welsh medium sector may therefore be under represented for this reason.

6. PROPOSALS FOR CHANGE

6.1 Following the data analysis above, the proposals for change are as follows:

- 44 SEN mainstream LSCs remain unaltered
- 4 SEN mainstream LSCs are opened.

6.2 It is proposed that the **new provisions** established from September 2020 are as follows:

- Key Stage 3/4 LSC provision for pupils with SEBD at Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School;
- Key Stage 3/4 LSC provision for pupils with SEBD at Ferndale Community School;
- Key Stage 3/4 LSC provision for pupils with SEBD at Mountain Ash Comprehensive School;
- Key Stage 3/4 LSC provision for pupils with significant ALN at Ysgol Garth Olwg.

7. CASE FOR CHANGE

7.1 There is a clear need to reduce the number of school exclusions, improve the education prospects of young people susceptible to school exclusions and to address the long-term costs and negative impact of exclusion on learner outcomes and their life chances.

7.2 Research conducted by Barnardo's ¹, suggests that children with SEN are nearly 10 times more likely to be permanently excluded and seven times more likely than others to receive a fixed term exclusion. There is also a strong association between poverty and deprivation, with pupils eligible for free school meals being four times more likely to be permanently excluded from secondary school and three times more likely to receive a fixed term exclusion than their

better off peers. For a few, exclusions may provide the short, sharp consequence that is needed, but for young people whose families are facing challenges it can be detrimental. Recent research published by Samaritans Cymru ² highlights that exclusions can result in loneliness, and social isolation thus impacting significantly on physical and mental health of young people. Repeat exclusions from schools for pupils who are already alienated can further exacerbate difficulties and rates of poor attendance and disengagement.

- 7.3 If we do not effectively meet the social, emotional and behavioural needs of pupils the cost to the young person includes reduced confidence, increased disaffection with school, with poor qualifications and employment prospects in the long term. Permanently excluded children are 3 times more likely than their peers to leave school without qualifications and 37% times more likely to be unemployed Brookes et al (2007)³.
- 7.4 Whilst the option to exclude has its place, the significant growth of exclusions in RCT points to a need for schools and the Council's specialist services to intervene much sooner and more effectively. Schools currently have a responsibility strengthening their approaches but pressures on specialist placements suggest that current provision does not meet need. Effective alternatives to exclusion are needed to intervene before the risk of exclusion escalates to a crisis level and the need for a PRU placement. The expansion of LSC provision would assist in strengthening the continuum of support available for some of our most vulnerable learners and replace demand for more specialist provision. It is estimated that the costs of a place in a PRU is £20,325 per year, compared with the cost of supporting a young person to remain with a LSC attached to a mainstream setting at £9k per annum. A placement in a LSC offers a more inclusive and appropriate solution within a school environment as well as being a more cost effective solution.
- 7.5 Department for Education⁴ reports consistent features that are perceived to work well in supporting pupils social, emotional and behavioural needs are: small class sizes, a relatively high teacher to pupil ratio compared with mainstream schools and intensive one to one pastoral support to understand and tackle the underlying issues that pupils may have, for example through learning mentors or other key workers. A LSC would meet all of these requirements.
- 7.6 In summary, the proposal for change provides a more inclusive model for addressing the escalating exclusion rates and incidents of challenging behaviour in RCT. Evidence clearly suggests that investing in early intervention and preventative approaches can reduce demand for the more specialist costly PRU placements and gives some of our vulnerable pupils the best chance of achieving success. It would also reduce pressures on mainstream schools who are experiencing significant challenges in resourcing the support that is needed for pupils with the most complex needs.

8. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Community Impact, Equality Impact and Welsh Language Assessments have been prepared in respect of this proposal and are attached as Appendix 1, 2 & 3 of this report. The assessments will be published on the Council's website together with the consultation document that outlines the proposal in detail.

9. CONSULTATION

- 9.1 The consultation process in respect of this proposal will be undertaken under the arrangements outlined in the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code (011/2018). These arrangements stipulate that consultation must be undertaken when the proposal is at a formative stage and that a consultation document must be prepared and circulated to prescribed consultees, as well as being published on the Council's website.
- 9.2 The consultation document for the proposals outlined in this report is attached as Appendix 4 and 4a to this report. The consultation period, if it is agreed to progress this matter, will run from the 10th January 2020 until 28th February 2020.

The Consultation report attached is in draft subject to Cabinet approval.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 Secondary schools hosting LSCs provisions are funded via the Council for one specialist teacher and two Learning Support Assistants at an approximate cost of £104k per class. In a bid to address the key priorities of the Council to reduce exclusions, address challenging behaviour within mainstream schools and increase the numbers of Welsh learners by improving the continuum of Welsh medium SEN provision, funding will be redirected from central Education services together with a contribution from Individual Schools Budget (ISB) totalling £416k per annum. Once settings are established it is our expectation that demand for secondary PRU placements will diminish and this funding will offset the increase in costs of the additional LSCs.
- 10.2 The creation of 4 LSCs will incur a transportation cost in line with the Council's Learner Travel Policy, however it may reduce the number of pupils travelling to the sole secondary PRU, and the impact may be marginal. This increase in cost is seen as a necessity in order to enhance provision for RCT's most vulnerable pupils. Costs cannot be quantified at this time as placements are pupil led. However, placement panel will always seek to place a pupil in the nearest LSC that meets their ALN needs.

11. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 11.1 Section 316A of the Education Act 1996 specifies that children with SEN should normally be educated in mainstream schools if this is compatible with them receiving the special educational provision that their learning difficulty requires; the efficient education of other children, and the efficient use of resources.

11.2 Section 315 of the Education Act 1996 also requires the Council to ensure that SEN provision is kept under review. Sections 1:20 and 1:21 of the SEN Code of Practice for Wales (2002) also requires LAs to evaluate the effectiveness of school funding arrangements in supporting and raising the achievement of children with SEN.

12. LINKS TO THE CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELLBEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT

12.1 The proposals will ensure that two of the Council's three key priorities will be met. These include

- Economy: Building a strong economy
- People: Promoting independence and positive lives for everyone.

12.2 The proposals will ensure that some of the Council's most vulnerable pupils will have the best chance of achieving positive outcomes. The proposals will ensure more efficient and effective use of Council resources to promote the development of social inclusion and positive outcomes for learners.

12.3 These proposals will ensure there is renewed capacity to focus on prevention which is a key statutory requirement of the Wellbeing and Future Generations Act and a key element of the Council's Corporate Plan.

13. CONCLUSION

13.1 Section 315 of the Education Act 1996 requires LAs to regularly review arrangements for supporting pupils with SEN and to ensure that provision is sufficient and meets the needs of its communities.

13.2 The priority for the Education and Inclusion Services Directorate is to continue to focus on driving up standards in schools and to improve the outcomes for all children and young people. In light of the Welsh Government ALN Transformation Agenda and the Council's vision to increase the number of Welsh medium learners in its schools by responding proactively to both national and local strategies such as the Welsh Government Welsh Language Strategy: Cymraeg 2050, Rhondda Cynon Taf's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan and the current 21st Century Schools plan for the restructure of Welsh medium provision in the Taf area, it is essential to enhance current Welsh medium SEN provision within RCT.

13.3 The proposed additional LSCs will ensure that the Council has an enhanced focus on providing more effective mainstream inclusion opportunities for pupils with SEBD and for Welsh medium pupils with significant Additional Learning Needs. The importance of mainstream inclusion for pupils with SEN is reflected in the revised Estyn Common Inspection Framework which highlights that judgements of achievement for all learners including those with additional learning needs should take account of progress made in relation to agreed learning goals from individual starting points. The framework also recognises the positive impact that the expertise within a LSC can have on enhancing

practice and improving outcomes for learners with SEN across the whole school.

- 13.4 The proposals ensure efficient use of resources and a more equitable continuum of provision for pupils with significant SEN.
- 13.5 It is recommended, therefore, that approval is given to commence consultation on the proposed enhancement to RCT's current mainstream LSC provision so that we can urgently address and resolve some of the challenges currently faced within the Council.

**Welsh Language Impact Assessment
Proposal to Enhance Learning Support Class Provision
within Rhondda Cynon Taf**

Introduction

This assessment has been undertaken in accordance with the guidelines outlines in Annex C of the School Organisation Code (011/2018).

Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT) is proposing to enhance the Special Education Needs (SEN) provision within the County Borough by creating four new Learning Support Classes (LSCs). It is proposed that three classes are created to support pupils with Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (SEBD) and one Welsh medium LSC to support pupils with significant additional learning needs (ALN).

LSC for pupils with Significant Additional Learning Needs

Currently SEN Welsh medium pupils with significant additional learning needs who would meet the criteria for English medium LSC provision are supported by a specialist peripatetic team, through an inclusive delivery support model. In line with the requirements of Additional Learning Needs Education Tribunal Act (ALNET) 2018, which stipulates that all LAs must provide bilingual provision and the Councils vision to increase the number of Welsh medium learners, our proposal seeks to create a dedicated Welsh medium LSC to support those learners identified as meeting LSC criteria. The host school will be Ysgol Garth Olwg, a Welsh medium through school (aged 3-19) which has benefited from 21st Century modernisation investment. The LSC will support 14 pupils with significant ALN. Places within the class will be allocated via the established SEN Placement Panels.

The Community Lifelong Learning Centre will be unaffected by this proposal. Additionally any services currently provided by Ysgol Garth Olwg to parents, pupils and the community will also remain unaltered, for example; Urdd, breakfast and after school clubs. Information on current building condition and suitability is contained with the consultation document.

One of the main targets outlined in the Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) is to increase the number of children receiving education through the medium of Welsh, which will assist the local authority in working towards the Cymraeg 2050 Welsh Government target of having 1 million people in Wales able to speak Welsh by 2050. We consider that this proposal will address the existing lack of Welsh medium LSC provision, allowing Welsh medium pupils with significant ALN to remain in a Welsh medium education setting.

LSC for pupils with Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties

The proposal also seeks to enhance LSC provision to support Key Stage 3/4 pupils with SEBD across the LA by creating LSCs hosted by English medium settings at Bryncelynog Comprehensive, Ferndale Community and Mountain Ash

Comprehensive Schools. The LSCs will each support 12 pupils with SEBD. Places within the classes will be allocated via the established SEN Placement Panels.

Any services currently provided by the schools (Bryncelynnog Comprehensive, Ferndale Community and Mountain Ash Comprehensive School) to parents, pupils and the community will remain unaltered; for example breakfast and after school clubs, community rooms. Information on current building condition and suitability is contained with the consultation document.

Conclusion

Section 315 of the Education Act 1996 requires LAs to regularly review arrangements for supporting pupils with SEN and to ensure that provision is sufficient and meets the needs of its communities.

The priority for the Education Directorate is to continue to focus on driving up standards in schools and to improve the outcomes for all children and young people. The proposal is in line with the Welsh Government ALN Transformation Agenda and the Council's vision to increase the number of Welsh medium learners in its schools through its proactive response to both national and local strategies.



Rhondda Cynon Taf Council

Equality Impact Assessment Questionnaire

Learning Support Class Proposals

Equality Impact Assessment Questionnaire

Directorate: Education & Inclusion Services

Service Area: Access & Inclusion Service

Responsible Officer: Ceri Jones

Date: November 2019

This Equality Impact Assessment is written in association with the Community Impact Assessments, the Welsh Language Impact Assessment and the associated Consultation Document.

1. Name of policy/procedure/practice/project: Enhancement of Learning Support Class (LSC) provision within Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT).

The project is to:

Enhance the LSC provision within RCT in order to better support Special Educational Needs (SEN) pupils to ensure provision meets current and projected pupil need. To achieve this, the proposal is to create 4 new Learning Support Classes; 3 to support pupils with Social, Emotional Behaviour Difficulties (SEBD) and one to support Welsh medium pupils with significant Additional Learning Needs (ALN).

To achieve this the proposal is to:

- create a new Key Stage 3/4 LSC provision for pupils with SEBD at Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School;
- create a new Key Stage 3/4 LSC provision for pupils with SEBD at Ferndale Community School;
- create a new Key Stage 3/4 LSC provision for pupils with SEBD at Mountain Ash Comprehensive School;

- create a new Key Stage 3/4 LSC provision for pupils with significant Additional Learning Needs (ALN) at Ysgol Garth Olwg.

2 Policy Aims, you need to consider why is the policy needed? What does the Council hope to achieve by it? How will the Council ensure it works as intended?

This proposal is fully outlined in a detailed consultation document that has been distributed to all interested parties and stakeholders. It is also available on the Council's website for any person to view or download.

In recent years, Estyn has sharpened its approach to inspection of schools and local authorities and has raised the bar in respect of what it considers to be good and excellent provision. Furthermore, Estyn has taken a very hard line on local authorities in Wales that have weaknesses in key areas such as corporate governance, educational standards, attendance levels, surplus places and safeguarding.

Consideration for this proposal has been aligned with the 21st Century Schools and Colleges Programme's long term strategic investment in the education estate throughout Wales. One of the priorities includes: addressing growth in demand for Welsh medium provision.

Rhondda Cynon Taf has an excellent range of LSC provisions attached to mainstream schools. However, in light of the requirements of the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) (ALNET) Act 2018 to create a bilingual system to support learners with ALN, and the concerns regarding rising exclusions and an increase in requests for SEBD placements it is felt necessary to enhance the current LSC provision to address the above issues.

The data we have used to realign provision includes:

- Current capacity within each LSC
- Requested placements over the last 3 academic years
- Transitional data
- Primary needs of pupils
- Outcome of requests for placements

Educational Considerations

Considerable changes are planned in Wales in relation to the statutory provision required to meet the needs of pupils with SEN/additional learning needs (ALN). The Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act (ALNET) was introduced in January 2018. The Act requires Local Authorities (LA) to keep under review the arrangements for supporting pupils with ALN within their area and consider whether these are sufficient. The Act will be supported by new regulations, including secondary legislation and a new statutory Additional Learning Needs Code. The current draft Code is based on the following principles:

- meeting the needs of pupils with ALN should be part of a whole school approach to school improvement
- pupils must be supported to participate in mainstream education and in the National Curriculum as fully as possible wherever this is feasible.

Until the anticipated implementation of the new ALN Code in September 2021, LAs are required to comply with the existing Special Educational Needs (SEN) Code of Practice for Wales (2002) and fulfil their statutory duties towards children with SEN. The Code states that children and young people have SEN if they have a learning difficulty which calls for a special educational provision to be made for them. Early years settings and schools are required to adopt a graduated response to meeting SEN at Early Years/School Action and Early Year/School Action Plus of the Code of Practice. For learners with the most significant SEN, a Statement of SEN is issued by the LA and statutory provision put in place.

A total of £3.4m Additional Needs Funding (ANF) is available to mainstream schools to ensure statutory mainstream provision for learners is robust and to support mainstream inclusion for learners with severe and persistent needs.

For pupils with more significant needs who experience difficulties in coping with mainstream education, more specialist placements are required. Rhondda Cynon Taf has a range of specialist provisions which includes, 44 LSCs, 2 Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) and 4 Special Schools. These placements are agreed by Access and Inclusion Service panels.

In light of the requirements of the ALNET ACT and the concerns regarding the continued increase in the number of exclusions of pupils from mainstream settings and the increasing demand for specialist SEBD placements, an in-depth data analysis exercise was undertaken to inform proposals for change.

Data analysis confirms that:

- there is currently insufficient SEBD provision in the secondary sector;
- there is insufficient provision to meet the needs of learners of Welsh medium pupils with significant SEN/ALN.

In light of these findings, the proposals for change seek to achieve the following aims:

- to enhance the continuum of provision that effectively addresses the need for specialist SEBD provision within Key Stage 3/4;
- to create a specialist LSC provision for Welsh medium Key Stage 3/4 pupils with significant ALN;

Proposed changes

- 44 SEN mainstream LSCs remain unaltered
- SEN mainstream LSCs are opened

What are the financial implications of the proposal?

The proposal will ensure that the County Borough Council continues in its commitment to effectively meet the needs of learners with SEN by prioritising resources to address gaps in existing provision and to improve the continuum of Welsh Medium specialist provision within Rhondda Cynon Taf.

The schools will be delegated sufficient funding to establish the proposed provisions. These costs will cover staffing and capitation.

What is the likely impact of the proposal on school pupils?

It is anticipated that the proposals will have a significantly positive impact on pupils with SEBD requiring specialist placement and Welsh medium pupils with significant ALN by providing an inclusive model of specialist provision hosted by mainstream schools that can meet their identified needs within their local community.

Transportation would be provided in line with the Council's Learner Travel Policy to the nearest and most appropriate specialist setting.

The Welsh Government and the Council has adopted the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child which is expressed in seven core aims that all children and young people:

1. Have a flying start in life;
2. Have a comprehensive range of education and learning opportunities;
3. Enjoy the best possible health and are free from abuse, victimisation and exploitation;
4. Have access to play, leisure, sporting and cultural activities;
5. Are listened to, treated with respect, and have their race and cultural identity recognised;
6. Have a safe home and a community which supports physical and emotional wellbeing;
7. Are not disadvantaged by poverty.

We consider that this proposal benefits children in their communities in accordance with the seven core aims set out above.

In addition, we consider that this proposal, contributes positively to Rhondda Cynon Taf's well-being agenda as well as each of the 7 goals of the Well-being of Future Generation Act Wales 2015:

1. A prosperous Wales
2. A resilient Wales
3. A healthier Wales
4. A more equal Wales
5. A Wales of cohesive communities
6. A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language
7. A globally responsible Wales

An assessment of the proposals on The Well-being of Future Generations Act's five ways of working is below:

<p>Long Term (The importance of balancing short term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long term needs)</p>	<p>How does your project / activity balance short-term need with the long-term and planning for the future?</p> <p>The long term vision for RCT is to provide all learners with the best opportunity possible to achieve their full potential through the means of education by providing access to the very best learning opportunities with modern, flexible facilities appropriate for delivering the new curriculum.</p> <p>The enhancement of specialist LSC provision in RCT will ensure the needs of our most vulnerable ALN pupils are addressed.</p>
<p>Prevention (How acting to prevent problems occurring or getting worse may help public bodies meet their objectives)</p>	<p>How does your project / activity put resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse?</p> <p>The Council recognises the challenges of providing everyone with the facilities and opportunities to receive an excellent education in 21st Century facilities. This proposal aims to enhance and improve the specialist LSC provision available for Key Stage 3/4 pupils, and create enhanced opportunities for the development of more specialist roles and strengthen graduated responses for learners with additional learning needs.</p>
<p>Integration (Considering how the public body's well-being objectives may impact upon each of the wellbeing goals, on their objectives, or on the objectives of other public bodies)</p>	<p>How does your project / activity deliver economic, social, environmental and cultural outcomes together?</p> <p>The Council recognises the importance of the Welsh language as a vital element to achieve and reinforce social and cultural benefits. This proposal will deliver a dedicated Welsh medium LSC for pupils with significant ALN, increase parental choice of provision and provide opportunities for wider community collaboration and participation and improved learning experience.</p>
<p>Collaboration (Acting in collaboration with any other person (or different parts of the body itself) that could help the body meet its well-being objectives)</p>	<p>How does your project / activity involve working together with partners (internal and external) to deliver well-being objectives?</p> <p>RCT is required to keep under review the arrangements for supporting pupils with ALN within its area and consider whether these are sufficient. Feedback from a recent Headteacher Task and Finish Group identified that the lack of Welsh medium LSC provision was an area of</p>

	concern. Stakeholders will have the opportunity to put forward their views during the consultation period.
Involvement (The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals, and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the area which the body serves)	<p>How does your project / facility involve stakeholders with an interest in achieving the well-being goals? How do those stakeholders reflect the diversity of the area?</p> <p>Consultation meetings are planned with student councils of all of the schools directly affected by the proposals, as well as with staff and governors, and an open evening will be in a central location which will be open to the public. All comments that are submitted during the consultation process will be considered by Cabinet.</p>

Implications for staff of the LSC

There will be no negative impact on existing LSC staff as current LSCs will be unaffected by the proposals. The proposal will have a positive impact, creating four teaching and eight non-teaching LSC posts, providing development opportunities for existing staff.

Implications on the local communities?

This proposal will not have any significant impact on the local communities for the following reasons:

- More local children will be able to access specialist provision within their local community and the new provisions will address a gap in existing provision. There will be less demand for transporting children out of area to receive their education and this should impact positively on the environment. The schools will make effective use of any surplus space within the school and develop a resource that will be of benefit to vulnerable children and young people, and their parents/carers. The proposed establishment of LSCs will enhance the overall capacity of the host schools to meet a diverse range of needs as there will be further specialist SEN expertise within the schools.

What will be the impact on the other ‘partner’ schools in the community?

Other partner/associated primary and secondary schools in each community will also benefit from the proposal. The enhancement of LSC provision within RCT will bolster the existing LSC provision and provide 50 additional specialist placements.

3. Who does it apply to? Please indicate by highlighting or deleting as appropriate

Members of the public Staff **Both** **Other**

Please state: SEN children aged 11-16 living in RCT, parents and carers of the children, staff

4. Indicate whether this is a new proposal, a review or a proposed cessation:

New Review Cessation

The proposal covers all 3 districts within the County Borough Council. There are 4 schools affected.

5. Identifying Impacts

Please choose whether the policy/practice will have a positive, negative or neutral effect on **each** issue below: Think about the key questions included in the manager’s guidelines.

People / issues to consider	Impact policy / practice will have			If a positive or negative impact is identified, explain why:
	Positive	Negative	Neutral (No impact)	

People / issues to consider	Impact policy / practice will have			If a positive or negative impact is identified, explain why:
	Positive	Negative	Neutral (No impact)	
Age (young and old)	Key Stage 2 Key Stage 3/4		Foundation Phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transition into appropriate Welsh Medium specialist provision at KS3/4. • Creation of Welsh Medium LSC provision • Appropriate placements which are well matched to pupils' primary needs • Improved educational outcomes and pupil engagement due to meeting identified pupil needs more effectively. • Greater opportunities for mainstream inclusion in local community schools • Improved continuum of learning provision which improves life chances for our most vulnerable learners
Disability (remember to consider the different types of disability)	Yes			The review of LSC provision will allow the LA to better meet the needs of its SEN pupils. Mainstream schools hosting the LSCs will be fully compliant with all disability legislation.
Gender			Yes	
Gender Reassignment			Yes	
Race			Yes	
Religion or Belief			Yes	
Sexual Orientation			Yes	

People / issues to consider	Impact policy / practice will have			If a positive or negative impact is identified, explain why:
	Positive	Negative	Neutral (No impact)	
Welsh Language	Yes			The creation of a LSC provision to support pupils with significant ALN through the medium of Welsh, thus supporting the Council's vision to increase the number of Welsh medium learners in its schools through the 21 st Century Schools modernisation plan, the Welsh Language Strategy, Cymraeg 2050 and to comply with the criteria of the ALNET Act to develop a bilingual ALN system.
Parents/Carers	Yes			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased potential to access appropriate specialist provision. • Increase opportunity for parents/carers to choose appropriate Welsh medium specialist provision.

Evidence

6. What evidence is there to support your conclusions? Please indicate below

Reports of the Director of Education to Cabinet – December 2019.
Public Consultation Document on the Proposal – January 2020.

7. In areas where a negative impact has been identified are there any ways that the negative effect could be reduced or removed? Please indicate below and include the evidence on which you have based your conclusion.

No negative impacts have been identified. Implementing this plan will be of benefit to pupils with SEBD and Welsh medium pupils with significant ALN across RCT and will ensure greater equality and access to specialist provision.

The creation of new LSCs could initially cause some limited disruption to the host mainstream schools for a period of time. However, it is recognised that hosting a specialist LSC provision enhances whole school-based SEN systems, thus improving outcomes for pupils with SEN across the whole school.

The Council considers that the educational advantages of the proposals outweigh the short-term impact of the changes for the pupils and parents.

Involvement & Consultation

9. What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this (or similar) policy and what are the results?

The following consultation meetings are to be held:

School Affected	Group-Pupils/ Staff/Parents	Time	Date	Venue
Ysgol Garth Olwg	Governing Body and staff	3:30pm - 4:30pm	13th January 2020	Ysgol Garth Olwg
Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School	Governing Body and staff	3:30pm - 4:30pm	14th January 2020	Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School
Ferndale Community School	Governing Body and staff	3:30pm - 4:30pm	15th January 2020	Ferndale Community School
Mountain Ash Comprehensive School	Governing Body and staff	3:30pm - 4:30pm	16th January 2020	Mountain Ash Comprehensive School

School Affected	Group-Pupils/ Staff/Parents	Time	Date	Venue
Ysgol Garth Olwg	School Council	9:30am - 10:30am	20th January 2020	Ysgol Garth Olwg
Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School	School Council	11:30am - 12:30pm	20th January 2020	Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School

Ferndale Community School	School Council	9:30am - 10:30am	21st January 2020	Ferndale Community School
Mountain Ash Comprehensive School	School Council	2:00pm - 3:00pm	21st January 2020	Mountain Ash Comprehensive School
RCT	RCT residents	4:30pm - 6:00pm	22nd January 2020	Hawthorn Leisure Centre

Interested parties are also welcome to put their views in writing to:

Director of Education and Inclusion Services
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
Ty Trevithick
Abercynon
CF45 4UQ

Or email A&IService@rctcbc.gov.uk

Monitoring & Review

10. What arrangements have you put in place to review the actual impact of the policy once it has been implemented?

The Council's Inclusion Service will be fully engaged in supporting head teachers and governing bodies to establish the LSC provisions through its well established line management and quality assurance processes relating to its management of LSC provisions. In line with the requirements of the SEN Code of Practice and Education Act 1996, the LA will continue to keep its LSC provision under review to ensure that it meets the identified needs of its learners with SEN in RCT.

Addressing the Impact

11. What option have you chosen as a result of your impact assessment?

- Continue the Policy

Please indicate and provide reasons for your decision.

The evidence outlined in our consultation document clearly recommends that this is the right approach

12. Action Plan

You now need to complete the EIA action plan to outline how you will act on any impacts identified. You may need to prioritise in terms of what actions you choose to take and the timescales to complete them in. In general terms, you should try to act on all negative impacts unless there is a clear reason as to why this is not possible. You could also identify actions for positive or neutral impacts where appropriate i.e. to outline and further promote a positive impact or to outline how to make something have a positive impact instead of a neutral one.

Action	Responsible Officer	Timescale for Actions	Timescale and actions for Review	Measures to be taken to evaluate effects of actions
If the proposal proceeds, the LA will undertake the statutory consultation process to implement the proposals.	Head of Inclusion Services	March 2020		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Compliance to with School Organisation Code requirements.
Publish Objection Report with objection summary	Head of Inclusion Services	Before the end of 7 days beginning with the day of its determination		
To undertake any refurbishment required to accommodate the new LSC provisions	Director of Corporate Estates	September 2020		

13. Please outline below any negative impacts that have been identified in the EIA questionnaire but not addressed in the action plan. You will need to explain your reasons for not addressing them.

None.

Please keep a copy of the questionnaire and action plan and send copies to:

Equality, Diversity & Social Justice Team
The Pavilions
Cambrian Park
Clydach
CF40 2XX

Email: equality@rhondda-cynon-taf.gov.uk

Tel: 01443 424075

Signed: Gaynor Davies

Date: 7th November 2019

Job Title: Director of Education & Inclusion Services

Community Impact Assessment

This assessment is prepared in accordance with guidance contained within Annex C of the School Organisation Code statutory guidance circular 011/2018.

Proposal: To open a Key Stage 3/4 LSC provision for pupils with Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (SEBD) at Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School

Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT) is proposing to enhance the Special Education Needs (SEN) provision within the County Borough by creating four new Learning Support Classes (LSCs). It is proposed that three classes are created to support pupils with Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (SEBD) and one Welsh medium LSC to support pupils with significant additional learning needs (ALN).

RCT County Borough Council proposes to create a Key Stage 3/4 LSC provision for pupils with SEBD at Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School with effect from the 1st of September 2020. The provision will accommodate 12 pupils and placements within the LSC will agreed in the Inclusion Service SEN Panels.

This proposal will be consulted on between 10th January 2020 and 28th February 2020. A detailed consultation document will be circulated to all prescribed consultees. Copies will be forwarded to the Welsh Government in compliance with consultation and publication guidelines. The document advises of the availability of all required Impact Assessments and informs all consultees as to how they can obtain copies if they required them.

The reasons for consideration of this particular proposal are fully outlined in the consultation document that will be widely distributed; this document clearly outlines the background to the proposal and why it has been necessary to bring it forward at this point in time.

The creation of the new provision is seen as positive. The proposal will not have any significant impact on the local communities as more local children will be able to access specialist provision within their local community. The LSC will make effective use of any surplus space within the school and develop a resource that will be of benefit to vulnerable children and young people, and their parents/carers. The proposed establishment of LSC will enhance the overall ability of the host school to meet a diverse range of needs as there will be further specialist SEN expertise within the school.

It is anticipated that the proposal will have a significantly positive impact on the health and wellbeing of pupils with SEBD requiring specialist placement hosted by mainstream schools that can meet their identified needs.

Any services currently provided by the school to parents, pupils and the community will remain unaltered for example breakfast and after school clubs.

Transportation would be provided in line with the Council's Learner Travel Policy and placement made in the nearest and most appropriate specialist setting. If placed within LSC pupils may be required to travel out of catchment however, enhancing the number of LSCs does provide additional options.

Community Impact Assessment

This assessment is prepared in accordance with guidance contained within Annex C of the School Organisation Code statutory guidance circular 011/2018.

Proposal: To open a Key Stage 3/4 LSC provision for pupils with Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (SEBD) at Ferndale Community School

Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT) is proposing to enhance the Special Education Needs (SEN) provision within the County Borough by creating four new Learning Support Classes (LSCs). It is proposed that three classes are created to support pupils with Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (SEBD) and one Welsh medium LSC to support pupils with significant additional learning needs (ALN).

RCT County Borough Council proposes to create a Key Stage 3/4 LSC provision for pupils with SEBD at Ferndale Community School with effect from the 1st of September 2020. The provision will accommodate 12 pupils and placements within the LSC will be agreed in the Inclusion Service SEN Panels.

This proposal will be consulted on between 10th January 2020 and 28th February 2020. A detailed consultation document will be circulated to all prescribed consultees. Copies will be forwarded to the Welsh Government in compliance with consultation and publication guidelines. The document advises of the availability of all required Impact Assessments and informs all consultees as to how they can obtain copies if they required them.

The reasons for consideration of this particular proposal are fully outlined in the consultation document that will be widely distributed; this document clearly outlines the background to the proposal and why it has been necessary to bring it forward at this point in time.

The creation of the new provision is seen as positive. The proposal will not have any significant impact on the local communities as more local children will be able to access specialist provision within their local community. The LSC will make effective use of any surplus space within the school and develop a resource that will be of benefit to vulnerable children and young people, and their parents/carers. The proposed establishment of LSC will enhance the overall ability of the host school to meet a diverse range of needs as there will be further specialist SEN expertise within the school.

It is anticipated that the proposal will have a significantly positive impact on the health and wellbeing of pupils with SEBD requiring specialist placement hosted by mainstream schools that can meet their identified needs.

Any services currently provided by the school to parents, pupils and the community will remain unaltered for example breakfast and after school clubs.

Transportation would be provided in line with the Council's Learner Travel Policy and placement made in the nearest and most appropriate specialist setting. If placed within

LSC pupils may be required to travel out of catchment however, enhancing the number of LSCs does provide additional options.

Community Impact Assessment

This assessment is prepared in accordance with guidance contained within Annex C of the School Organisation Code statutory guidance circular 011/2018.

Proposal: To open a Key Stage 3/4 LSC provision for pupils with Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (SEBD) at Mountain Ash Comprehensive School

Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT) is proposing to enhance the Special Education Needs (SEN) provision within the County Borough by creating four new Learning Support Classes (LSCs). It is proposed that three classes are created to support pupils with Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (SEBD) and one Welsh medium LSC to support pupils with significant additional learning needs (ALN).

RCT County Borough Council proposes to create a Key Stage 3/4 LSC provision for pupils with SEBD at Mountain Ash Comprehensive School with effect from the 1st of September 2020. The provision will accommodate 12 pupils and placements within the LSC will be agreed in the Inclusion Service SEN Panels.

This proposal will be consulted on between 10th January 2020 and 28th February 2020. A detailed consultation document will be circulated to all prescribed consultees. Copies will be forwarded to the Welsh Government in compliance with consultation and publication guidelines. The document advises of the availability of all required Impact Assessments and informs all consultees as to how they can obtain copies if they required them.

The reasons for consideration of this particular proposal are fully outlined in the consultation document that will be widely distributed; this document clearly outlines the background to the proposal and why it has been necessary to bring it forward at this point in time.

The creation of the new provision is seen as positive. The proposal will not have any significant impact on the local communities as more local children will be able to access specialist provision within their local community. The LSC will make effective use of any surplus space within the school and develop a resource that will be of benefit to vulnerable children and young people, and their parents/carers. The proposed establishment of LSC will enhance the overall ability of the host school to meet a diverse range of needs as there will be further specialist SEN expertise within the school.

It is anticipated that the proposal will have a significantly positive impact on the health and wellbeing of pupils with SEBD requiring specialist placement hosted by mainstream schools that can meet their identified needs.

Any services currently provided by the school to parents, pupils and the community will remain unaltered, for example, breakfast and after school clubs.

Transportation would be provided in line with the Council's Learner Travel Policy and placement made in the nearest and most appropriate specialist setting. If placed within LSC pupils may be required to travel out of catchment however, enhancing the number of LSCs does provide additional options for specialist placement.

Community Impact Assessment

This assessment is prepared in accordance with guidance contained within Annex C of the School Organisation Code statutory guidance circular 011/2018.

Proposal: To open a Key Stage 3/4 LSC provision for pupils with significant Additional Learning Needs (ALN) at Ysgol Garth Olwg.

Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT) is proposing to enhance the Special Education Needs (SEN) provision within the County Borough by creating four new Learning Support Classes (LSCs). It is proposed that three classes are created to support pupils with Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (SEBD) and one Welsh medium LSC to support pupils with significant additional learning needs (ALN).

RCT County Borough Council proposes to create a Key Stage 3/4 LSC provision for pupils with significant ALN at Ysgol Garth Olwg with effect from the 1st of September 2020. The provision will accommodate 14 pupils and placements within the LSC will be agreed in the Inclusion Service SEN Panels.

This proposal will be consulted on between 10th January 2020 and 28th February 2020. A detailed consultation document will be circulated to all prescribed consultees. Copies will be forwarded to the Welsh Government in compliance with consultation and publication guidelines. The document advises of the availability of all required Impact Assessments and informs all consultees as to how they can obtain copies if they require them.

The reasons for consideration of this particular proposal are fully outlined in the consultation document that will be widely distributed; this document clearly outlines the background to the proposal and why it has been necessary to bring it forward at this point in time.

The creation of the new provision is seen as positive. The proposal will not have any significant impact on the local communities as more local children will be able to access specialist provision within their local community. The LSC will make effective use of any surplus space within the school and develop a resource that will be of benefit to vulnerable children and young people, and their parents/carers. The proposed establishment of LSC will enhance the overall ability of the host school to meet a diverse range of needs as there will be further specialist SEN expertise within the school.

It is anticipated that the proposal will have a significantly positive impact on the health and wellbeing of pupils with significant ALN attending Welsh medium provision as it will enhance the current inclusive model provided by the specialist Welsh medium peripatetic team and will address the current gap in provision.

The Lifelong Learning Centre on the site of Ysgol Garth Olwg provides a significant amount of community facilities and these will be unaffected. Any services currently provided by the school to parents, pupils and the community will remain unaltered, for example, Urdd, breakfast and after school clubs.

Transportation would be provided in line with the Council's Learner Travel Policy and placement made in the nearest and most appropriate specialist setting. If placed within LSC pupils may be required to travel out of catchment however, enhancing the number of LSCs does provide additional options for specialist placement.



Consultation on the

ENHANCEMENT OF LEARNING

SUPPORT CLASS PROVISION WITHIN

RHONDDA CYNON TAF

November 2019

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Section 1

Introduction

Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT) County Borough Council wishes to seek the views of a wide range of stakeholders on proposals to enhance mainstream Learning Support Class (LSC) provision within RCT.

The proposals seek to address the increase in exclusions and the demand for specialist Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (SEBD) placement in Key Stage 3/4 and the need to create Welsh medium specialist LSC provision, in line with the requirements of the Additional Learning Needs Education Tribunal (ALNET) Act 2018 to provide a bilingual Additional Learning Needs (ALN) system.

The proposals seek to achieve the following aims to:

- enhance the continuum of provision that effectively addresses the need for specialist SEBD provision within Key Stage 3/4;
- create a specialist LSC provision for Welsh medium Key Stage 3/4 pupils with significant ALN;

To achieve these aims, the proposals for change include:

Proposed development of new provisions

It is proposed that four LSCs for Key Stages 3/4 are established in September 2020:

- Key Stage 3/4 LSC provision for pupils with SEBD at Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School accommodating 12 pupils;
- Key Stage 3/4 LSC provision for pupils with SEBD at Ferndale Community School accommodating 12 pupils;
- Key Stage 3/4 LSC provision for pupils with SEBD at Mountain Ash Comprehensive School accommodating 12 pupils ;
- Key Stage 3/4 LSC provision for pupils with significant ALN at Ysgol Garth Olwg accommodating 14 pupils.

Who will we consult?

We are seeking the views of the following stakeholders:

- The Governing Bodies, parents, carers and staff of the following schools: Bryncelynnog Comprehensive, Ferndale Community, Mountain Ash Comprehensive School and Ysgol Garth Olwg
- Governing Bodies, parents/carers of pupils attending primary schools within the catchment area of the proposed host secondary schools
- The Church in Wales and Roman Catholic Diocesan Authorities
- The Governing Body of Coleg Y Cymoedd
- The Governing Body of the University of South Wales
- Welsh Ministers including Welsh Minister for Education and Skills
- Menter Iaith

- Assembly Members and members of Parliament for all constituencies and regional areas serving Rhondda Cynon Taf
- Estyn
- Cwm Taf Morgannwg Local Health Board
- Teaching and Support staff trade unions
- Central South Consortium Joint Education Service
- South Wales Police and Crime Commissioner
- The Early Years and Childcare Partnership
- South East Wales Transport Association
- The local Communities First Partnerships
- The Welsh Language Commissioner
- Neighbouring local authorities
- SNAP Cymru

What will the consultation process entail?

The consultation will start on the 10th January 2020 and will be completed at 5pm on 28th February 2020. Feedback from the consultation will be collated and summarised and a report presented to the Council's Cabinet in March 2020. This consultation report will be available for all persons to view on the Council website and copies can be obtained on request from the address detailed on www.rctcbc.gov.uk.

The Council's Cabinet will consider the report, based on the feedback, and decide whether to proceed with the proposal, make changes to the proposal or not to proceed with the proposal. If the Cabinet decides not to proceed, that will be the end of this proposal for the foreseeable future.

If the Cabinet decides to proceed with the proposal Statutory Notices will be published in April 2020 providing a 28 day notice period for objections.

The School Organisation Code (011/2018) requires that anyone wishing to make objections to a school organisation proposal has the opportunity to do so. To be considered as statutory objections, objections **must** be made in writing or by email, and sent to the Council within 28 days of the date on which the proposal was published.

If there are objections, the Council's Director of Education & Inclusion Services will publish an objection report providing a summary of the objections and her response to them within 7 days of the determination decision by the Council's Cabinet. This report will also be available for all persons to view on the Council's website and copies can be obtained on request from the address detailed in Appendix 1.

If the Council's Cabinet approve the proposal, the proposal will be implemented in accordance with the date given in the statutory notice or any subsequently modified date. In the case of this proposal, the implementation date is the 1st of September 2020.

What do you now have to consider?

The remainder of the consultation document sets out the rationale for the proposed additional LSC provision within RCT.

We would like you to consider the information contained within this document and to hear your views as to whether or not you support the proposals.

How do you make your views known?

A consultation questionnaire is attached (Appendix 1), and is also available on the Council's internet site at www.rctcbc.gov.uk. The questionnaire also enables consultees to register their wish to be notified of the publication of the consultation report to the Council's Cabinet. Schools will also be offered opportunities to consult with pupils and are advised to consult with School Council representatives to seek pupil views. You are also welcome to put your views in writing to:

Director of Education and Inclusion Services, Education Directorate, Ty Trevithick, Abercynon CF45 4UQ

Telephone: (01443) 744333

E-mail: A&IService@rctcbc.gov.uk

Fax: (01443) 744024

All correspondence should be received no later than the 28th February 2020.

Please note that responses to the consultation will not be counted as objections to the proposal. Objections can only be forwarded following the publication of the Statutory Notice. The consultation documentation will be distributed in both English and Welsh. Consultation events will be held and you are welcome to attend the appropriate meetings.

Consultation Events

The following consultation meetings are to be held:

School Affected	Group	Time	Date	Venue
Ysgol Garth Olwg	Governing Body and staff	3:30pm - 4:30pm	13 th January 2020	Ysgol Garth Olwg
Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School	Governing Body and staff	3:30pm - 4:30pm	14 th January 2020	Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School
Ferndale Community School	Governing Body and staff	3:30pm - 4:30pm	15 th January 2020	Ferndale Community School
Mountain Ash Comprehensive School	Governing Body and staff	3:30pm - 4:30pm	16 th January 2020	Mountain Ash Comprehensive School

School Affected	Group	Time	Date	Venue
Ysgol Garth Olwg	School Council	9:30am - 10:30am	20 th January 2020	Ysgol Garth Olwg
Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School	School Council	11:30am - 12:30pm	20 th January 2020	Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School
Ferndale Community School	School Council	9:30am - 10:30am	21 st January 2020	Ferndale Community School
Mountain Ash Comprehensive School	School Council	2:00pm - 3:00pm	21 st January 2020	Mountain Ash Comprehensive School
RCT	RCT residents	4:30pm - 6:00pm	22 nd January 2020	Hawthorn Leisure Centre

Section 2

Background

RCT has an excellent range of SEN provisions which allows the majority of pupils to attend schools near to where they live. These include 44 LSCs attached to mainstream settings, 4 special schools and 2 Pupil Referral Units (PRUs). RCT does not currently have special school provision solely for SEBD, although Maesgwyn Special School does have learners with complex learning and SEBD. In addition to this, £3.4M is made available via delegated Additional Needs Funding (ANF) annually to support pupils with severe and persistent needs in mainstream settings. This is in line with RCT's vision for inclusive education and the right for children with SEN to be educated in their local mainstream school where appropriate.

The Special Educational Needs (SEN) Code of Practice for Wales (2002) provides detailed guidance on the duties and responsibilities of local authorities (LAs) in meeting the SEN of children and young people. Children and young people have SEN if they have a learning difficulty which calls for a special educational provision to be made for them. A learning difficulty is evident when children and young people have:

- significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children and young people of the same age; or
- a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children and young people of the same age in schools within the area of the locality.

The SEN Code of Practice for Wales (2002) recommends that early years and school settings adopt a graduated response to meeting SEN. A graduated response means that progressively greater expertise and support can be brought in to address the difficulties a child or young person may be experiencing. Additional or different provision should be made at Early Years/School Action, Early Years/School Action Plus or a Statement of SEN depending on the severity of the child/young person's level of need.

Section 316A of the Education Act 1996 specifies that children with SEN should normally be educated in mainstream schools so long as this is compatible with them receiving the special educational provision that their learning difficulty calls for, the efficient education of other children, and the efficient use of resources. For those pupils who have very significant needs, more specialist placements are required and this might result in a placement in one of our specialist provisions. These placements are agreed by the Inclusion Service panels.

Despite the wide range of LSC provisions attached to mainstream schools, in light of the requirements of the ALNET Act 2018 and the continuing concerns regarding rising exclusions and an increase in requests for SEBD placement it is felt necessary to enhance the current LSC provision to address the above issues.

Data analysis confirms that:

- there is currently insufficient SEBD provision in the secondary sector;

- there is no specialist LSC provision to meet the needs of learners of Welsh medium pupils.

In the context of the above, the proposals for change seek to achieve the following aims:

- to enhance the continuum of provision that effectively addresses the need for specialist SEBD provision within Key Stage 3/4;
- to create a specialist LSC provision for Welsh medium Key Stage 3/4 pupils with significant ALN;

Overview of the Proposals

RCT County Borough Council wishes to seek the view of a wide range of stakeholders on the proposal to proceed with establishing four new LSCs provisions with effect from the 1st September 2020:

- Key Stage 3/4 LSC provision for pupils with SEBD at Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School;
- Key Stage 3/4 LSC provision for pupils with SEBD at Ferndale Community School;
- Key Stage 3/4 LSC provision for pupils with SEBD at Mountain Ash Comprehensive School;
- Key Stage 3/4 LSC provision for pupils with significant ALN at Ysgol Garth Olwg.

What is the basis for this proposal?

Section 315 of the Education Act 1996 requires LAs to regularly review arrangements for supporting pupils with SEN and to ensure that provision is sufficient and meets the needs of its communities. Exclusion and positive physical intervention data clearly suggests that there has been a significant increase in the level of challenging behaviour displayed in our schools. Demand for specialist placements far outstrips supply and a dramatic growth (290%) in learning support class placement referrals for SEBD has been evident in the last 5 years.

The priority for the Education and Inclusion Service Directorate is to continue to focus on driving up standards in schools and to improve the outcomes for all children and young people. In light of the Welsh Government ALN Transformation Agenda and the Council's vision to increase the number of Welsh medium learners in its schools by responding proactively to both national and local strategies, such as the Welsh Government Welsh Language Strategy: Cymraeg 2050, Rhondda Cynon Taf's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan and the current 21st Century Schools plan to increase and improve Welsh medium provision RCT, it is essential to enhance current Welsh medium ALN provision within RCT.

The proposed additional LSCs will ensure that the LA has an enhanced focus on providing more effective mainstream inclusion opportunities for pupils with SEBD and

for Welsh medium pupils with significant ALN. The importance of mainstream inclusion for pupils with SEN is reflected in the revised Estyn Common Inspection Framework which highlights that judgements of achievement for all learners including those with additional learning needs should take account of progress made in relation to agreed learning goals from individual starting points. The framework also recognises the positive impact that the expertise within a LSC can have on enhancing practice and improving outcomes for learners with SEN across the whole school. The proposals ensure efficient use of resources and a more equitable continuum of provision for pupils with significant SEN.

What is the educational case for the proposal to create additional LSC provision?

The advantages of implementing the proposed changes includes:

- an enhanced focus on improved mainstream LSC provision which provides improved life chances for our most vulnerable learners
- appropriate continuum of provision which is well matched to pupils' primary needs
- compliance with one of the underpinning principles of the SEN Code of Practice for Wales that all pupils should access mainstream education where possible
- improved educational outcomes and pupil engagement due to effectively meeting pupil needs
- greater opportunities for mainstream inclusion in local community schools
- ensuring that LSC provision is situated within education settings that are accessible and appropriate for the needs of pupils with wide ranging needs, including physical and medical needs
- improving the range and quality of facilities and learning resources available to the benefit of all pupils
- compliance with a core aim of ALNET Act to create a bilingual ALN system.
- the enhanced LSC provisions are being hosted by schools that have the capacity for the development of additional classes due to surplus spaces and can accommodate the additional pupils who will be placed in the schools.

What are the financial implications of the proposal?

The LA proposal if agreed will have a positive impact on pupils with SEN across RCT as it will mean that the funding will be directed to establish provisions that address areas of growing need. The proposal will ensure that the County Borough Council continues in its commitment to meeting the needs of learners with SEN effectively by addressing gaps in existing provision this improving the quality of provision within Rhondda Cynon Taf.

The schools will be delegated sufficient funding to establish the proposed provisions. These costs will cover staffing and capitation. The proposals do not involve any transfer or disposal of land.

The creation of four LSCs will incur a transportation cost in line with the Council's Learner Travel Policy. However, this increase in cost is seen as a necessity in order to enhance provision for RCT's most vulnerable pupils. Costs cannot be predicted at

this time as placements are pupil led. However, placement panel will always seek to place a pupil in the nearest LSC that meets their ALN needs.

What is the likely impact of the proposal on school pupils?

It is anticipated that the proposals will have a significantly positive impact on pupils with SEBD requiring specialist placement and Welsh medium pupils with significant ALN by providing an inclusive model of specialist provision hosted by mainstream schools that can meet their identified needs within their local community.

Transportation would be provided in line with the Council's Learner Travel Policy and placement made in the nearest and most appropriate specialist setting. If placed within LSCs pupils may be required to travel out of catchment however, enhancing the number of LSCs does provide additional options.

The Welsh Government and the Council has adopted the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child which is expressed in seven core aims that all children and young people:

1. Have a flying start in life;
2. Have a comprehensive range of education and learning opportunities;
3. Enjoy the best possible health and are free from abuse, victimisation and exploitation;
4. Have access to play, leisure, sporting and cultural activities;
5. Are listened to, treated with respect, and have their race and cultural identity recognised;
6. Have a safe home and a community which supports physical and emotional wellbeing;
7. Are not disadvantaged by poverty.

We consider that this proposal benefits children in their communities in accordance with the seven core aims set out above.

What is the likely impact of the proposal on the staff of the LSC?

There will be no negative impact on existing LSC staff as current LSCs will be unaffected by the proposals. The proposal will have a positive impact creating four teaching and eight non-teaching LSC posts, providing development opportunities for existing staff.

What is the likely impact of the proposal on the local communities?

A Community Impact Assessment has been completed and is included as an appendix. This proposal will not have any significant impact on the local communities as more local children will be able to access specialist provision within their local community and the new provisions will address a gap in existing provision. The schools will make effective use of any surplus space within the school and develop a resource that will be of benefit to vulnerable children and young people, and their parents/carers.

The proposed establishment of LSCs will enhance the overall capacity of the host schools to meet a diverse range of needs as there will be further specialist SEN expertise within the school.

In addition, Equality Impact and Welsh Language Assessments have been completed for this proposal and are attached as appendices. These will be updated after the consultation has been completed to ensure that they include pertinent issues that have arisen and need to be taken into account. The assessments will be presented to the Council's Cabinet in the report that sets out the consultation feedback received in respect of this proposal.

What are the disadvantages of these proposals?

Implementing this plan will be of benefit to pupils with SEBD and Welsh medium pupils with significant ALN across RCT and will ensure greater equality and access to specialist provision.

The creation of new LSCs could potentially cause some limited disruption to mainstream schools hosting the LSCs for a period of time. However, it is recognised that hosting a specialist LSC provision has a positive impact on enhancing practice and improving outcomes for pupils with SEN across the whole school.

The Council considers that the educational advantages of the proposals outweigh the short-term impact of the changes for the pupils and parents.

What alternative options have been considered?

In light of the requirements of the ALNET Act and concerns regarding rising exclusions and an increase in requests for SEBD placement to do nothing would mean that RCT would not be meeting its statutory requirement to meet the identified ALN of some of its most vulnerable pupils.

There is clearly identified need for this provision within RCT and it would be in children and young people's interest to address this. Some consideration was given to re-directing resources to further enhance the capacity of mainstream schools to meet need in local community schools. However, in so doing this could make the continuum of provision more fragmented which could in turn enhance pressures for special school and PRU placements.

Whilst alternative options have been considered, these have not been pursued given the obvious benefits of implementing these changes. Alternative secondary schools could be approached to establish a specialist provision. However, Bryncelynog Comprehensive, Ferndale Community, Mountain Ash Comprehensive Schools and Ysgol Garth Olwg were selected because of their inclusive practice and success in supporting pupils with SEN in the mainstream and surplus capacity. Furthermore, the location of the settings will address local need. Establishing these provisions will reduce the demand for special school/PRU placements which can then be safeguarded for pupils with more complex learning, medical and physical needs. However, it is anticipated that through effective early intervention and prevention the

demand for high end placements should diminish. A further review of PRU provision in the County will be undertaken in due course.

Community, Equality and Welsh Language Impact Assessments

Community Impact, Equality Impact and Welsh Language Assessments have been prepared in respect of this proposal and are attached as appendices. Copies will also be published on the Council's website hard copies can be obtained by emailing a request to A&IService@rctcbc.gov.uk or by telephoning 01443 744333.

Section 3

Proposed New Provisions

RCT County Borough Council proposes to create the following new LSCs provision with effect from the 1st of September 2020:

- Key Stage 3/4 LSC provision for pupils with SEBD at Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School accommodating 12 pupils;
- Key Stage 3/4 LSC provision for pupils with SEBD at Ferndale Community School accommodating 12 pupils;
- Key Stage 3/4 LSC provision for pupils with SEBD at Mountain Ash Comprehensive School accommodating 12 pupils ;
- Key Stage 3/4 LSC provision for pupils with significant ALN at Ysgol Garth Olwg accommodating 14 pupils,

Background to the opening of new LSC's

Improving the quality of education and raising standards is one of the Council's key priorities. It is considered that improving standards and educational outcomes for some of our most vulnerable pupils will improve their life chances, access to the world of work and other education pathways. Ensuring that our provisions are well matched to the needs of pupils is central to pupils achieving positive outcomes.

One of the main targets outlined in the Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) is to increase the number of children receiving education through the medium of Welsh, which will assist the local authority in working towards the Cymraeg 2050 Welsh Government target of having 1 million people in Wales able to speak Welsh by 2050. We consider that this proposal will address the existing lack of Welsh medium LSC provision, allowing Welsh medium pupils with significant ALN to remain in a Welsh medium education setting and work towards the Council's WESP. Rising exclusion rates within RCT is a cause for concern. The development of three specialist SEBD provisions is aiming to address this concern and that of the increasing demand for SEBD Secondary LSC provision.

The LSCs will be located within mainstream schools with appropriate accommodation. By locating specialist provision within mainstream settings, pupils will have the opportunity for increased inclusion. This is supported by the Estyn Common Inspection Framework, which highlights the positive impact that the expertise within a LSC can have on enhancing practice and improving outcomes for learners with SEN across the whole school.

The LA currently has LSCs within 8 of the 17 middle/secondary provisions with two LSCs for pupils with SEBD at Pontypridd High School and Ysgol Nant Gwyn. The additional three LSCs will enhance current provision by providing specialist LSCs across the County Borough. The establishment of the Welsh medium LSC for pupils with significant ALN will address a current gap in LSC provision.

Information on schools affected by the proposals

Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School

General Information

Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School is located at Penycoedcae Road, Beddau, Pontypridd, CF38 2AE. The school is a 11-18 aged mixed English medium comprehensive school. The building site is a mix of building and designs ranging from a Victoria building to CLASP to a relatively new build. The LA's building condition survey reports the school as a category C+. The school currently has a LSC for pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

Pupil Projections

The pupil numbers and forecast information for Bryncelynnog Comprehensive from 2019-2021 are shown below and are obtained from the statutory PLASC which is undertaken in January each year. The pupil forecasts for Bryncelynnog Comprehensive are calculated in accordance with guidance issued by Welsh Government.

School Name	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School	1046	1044	1088	1126	1179	1207	1248	1283	1307	1297

Capacity: 1442

Quality and Standards

Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School was last inspected by Estyn in February 2016. The inspection comments are summarised as follows:

The school's current performance	Adequate
The school's prospects for improvement	Good

Bryncelynnog Comprehensive has been categorised as a green school. This defines them as 'effective, already doing well, know the areas needed to improve, and by identifying the right support and taking action have the potential to do even better'.

It should be noted that figures in the table above are based on the most recent published PLASC figures and do not reflect the changes that will come into effect in September 2022 when the sixth form capacity at Bryncelynnog Comprehensive will increase. These changes will come into effect following a recent school organisation consultation, the outcome of which was determined by Cabinet in July 2019.

Mountain Ash Comprehensive School

General Information

Mountain Ash Comprehensive School is located at New Road, Mountain Ash, CF45 4DG. The school is an 11-18 aged mixed English medium comprehensive school. The building is modern and in good repair. The LA's building condition survey reports the school as a category B. The school does not currently have LSC provision.

Pupil Projections

The pupil numbers and forecast information for Mountain Ash Comprehensive School from 2019-2021 are shown below and are obtained from the statutory PLASC which is undertaken in January each year. The pupil forecasts for Mountain Ash Comprehensive School are calculated in accordance with guidance issued by Welsh Government.

Pupil Numbers and forecast information:

School Name	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Mountain Ash Comprehensive School	837	859	862	879	930	1008	1067	1082	1082	1093

Capacity: 1414

Quality and Standards

Mountain Ash Comprehensive School was last inspected by Estyn in November 2018. The inspection comments are summarised as follows:

Inspection area	Judgement
Standards	Adequate and needs improvement
Wellbeing and attitudes to learning	Adequate and needs improvement
Teaching and Learning Experiences	Adequate and needs improvement
Care, support and guidance	Good
Leadership and Management	Adequate and needs improvement

Mountain Ash Comprehensive has been categorised as an amber school.

Ferndale Community School

General Information

Ferndale Community School is located Excelsior Terrace, Maerdy, Ferndale, CF43 4AR. The school is a 11-16 aged mixed English medium comprehensive school. The building is of good repair. The LA's building condition survey reports the school as a category B, on a site that has benefited from modernisation through the 21st Century School Modernisation Programme. The school currently has a LSC provision for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties.

Pupil Projections

The pupil numbers and forecast information for Ferndale Community School from 2019-2021 are shown below and are obtained from the statutory PLASC which is undertaken in January each year. The pupil forecasts for Ferndale Community School are calculated in accordance with guidance issued by Welsh Government.

Pupil Numbers and forecast information:

School Name	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Ferndale Community School	636	608	555	579	589	595	619	617	631	678

Capacity: 650

Quality and Standards

Ferndale Community School was last inspected by Estyn in October 2017. The inspection comments are summarised as follows:

Inspection area	Judgement
Standards	Excellent
Wellbeing and attitudes to learning	Good
Teaching and Learning Experiences	Good
Care, support and guidance	Good
Leadership and Management	Good

Ferndale Community School has been categorised as a yellow school.

Ysgol Garth Olwg

General Information

Ysgol Garth Olwg is located Main Road, Church Village, Pontypridd, CF38 1DX. The school is a newly created 3 – 19 Welsh medium provision and is situated on a site that has benefited from the 21st Century School Modernisation Programme. The LA's building condition survey reports the school as a category A. The school does not currently have LSC provision.

Pupil Projections

The pupil numbers and forecast information for Ysgol Garth Olwg from 2019-2021 are shown below and are obtained from the statutory PLASC which is undertaken in January each year. The pupil forecasts for Ysgol Garth Olwg are calculated in accordance with guidance issued by Welsh Government. The numbers shown exclude nursery age pupils, as required by Welsh Government's Statutory School Organisation Code.

Pupil Numbers and forecast information:

School Name	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2018/19	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Ysgol Garth Olwg 11-16	801	807	803	810	813					
Ysgol Garth Olwg 3-16						1183	1210	1208	1237	1230

Capacity: Secondary 1110, Primary 324

Quality and Standards

As this is a new education setting there are no Estyn reports currently available. This proposal does not adversely impact any children as it is proposed that the provision is established to meet an identified need.

Ysgol Garth Olwg has been categorised as a yellow school.

The proposal will ensure that the current gap in secondary LSC provision for learners with SEBD and Welsh Medium pupils with significant ALN is addressed.

Consultation Response Pro-forma

In order to help the Council reach a decision, it would be very helpful if you could answer the following questions. Completed questionnaires should be returned to:

Director of Education and Inclusion Services, Access and Inclusion Service, Ty Trevithick, Abercynon, CF45 4UQ or by fax to 01443 744333, or email to A&IService@rctcbc.gov.uk

Proposal 1: Creation of 3 Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (SEBD) Learning Support Classes with effect from the 1st of September 2020:

- Key Stage 3/4 LSC provision for pupils with SEBD at Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School;
- Key Stage 3/4 LSC provision for pupils with SEBD at Ferndale Community School;
- Key Stage 3/4 LSC provision for pupils with SEBD at Mountain Ash Comprehensive School;

1a. Do you agree with the proposal? Yes No Not sure

Please let us know the reasons for your choice

Proposal 2: Creation of a Welsh medium Learning Support Class with effect from the 1st of September 2020:

- Key Stage 3/4 LSC provision for pupils with significant ALN at Ysgol Garth Olwg.

1b. Do you agree with the proposal? Yes No Not sure

Please let us know the reasons for your choice

2. Please state any alternative options or additional views or points which you would like to be taken into account (attach additional sheets if necessary)

3. How you feel the proposal could impact opportunities for people to use and promote the Welsh Language (Positive or Negative) and if in any way it treats the Welsh Language less favourably than the English Language?

Positive or negative

4. Please state how positive effects could be increased, or negative effects be decreased?

Please indicate who you are (e.g. parent of a pupil at named school, governor at named school etc.)

Name (Optional). Please provide contact details if you wish to be notified of publication of the consultation report

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. Please forward completed questionnaires to the above address no later **than 5pm on the 28th February 2020**. The Council is committed to keeping your personal information safe and secure and keeping you informed about how we use your information. To learn about how your privacy is protected and how and why we use your personal information to provide you with services, please visit our Consultation privacy notice here: www.rctcbc.gov.uk/serviceprivacynotice and the Council's **data protection** pages here: www.rctcbc.gov.uk/dataprotection.

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

17TH DECEMBER 2019

RHONDDA CYNON TAF TO ADMINSTRATE THE MERTHYR TYDFIL COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL'S DISABLED FACILITY GRANT

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROSPERITY AND DEVELOPMENT, IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER CLLR R BEVAN

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Appendices: RCTCBC DFG Process Appendix A
 MTCBC DFG Process Appendix B
 New proposed DFG Process Appendix C

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to set out proposals for Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council (RCT) to act as the Lead Body for the administration and monitoring of the mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) for Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council (MTCBC).

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Cabinet:

2.1 Approve the proposal for Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council (RCT) to act as the Lead Body for the administration and monitoring of the mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) for Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council (MTCBC) as set out in section 5 of this report.

3.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 Local Authorities have a mandatory duty to consider all applications for Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG's). On the 3rd July, MTCBC's Chief Executive formally wrote to RCT's Chief Executive to explore if there is any potential capacity and appetite to enter a collaborative arrangement for RCT to deliver Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG's) across Cwm Taf. This request was made as a result of all MTCBC's DFG staff being given

an in principle agreement for Voluntary Early Retirement this financial year.

- 3.2 The proposals will ensure that MTCBC meet its mandatory duty to consider DFG's, therefore enabling disabled residents to have the opportunity to receive a grant in order to make adaptations to their homes allowing them to live independently.
- 3.3 The recommendations will help address findings set out in the Welsh Audit Office Housing Adaptations review. Specifically the recommendation for Councils to work together and with partner agencies to maximise both take up and the benefits of adaptations in supporting independence by pooling of resources and creating integrated delivery teams.

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Local Authorities have a mandatory duty to consider all applications for Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG's). The grant is administered under the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 (as amended) and specific details of the grant are contained within the Act of Parliament and associated guidance.
- 4.2 Disabled Facilities Grants are awarded for essential adaptations to give a disabled person better freedom of movement around their home and support them to live independently. This work could include widening doors, installing ramps, installing a stair lift, installing a downstairs bathroom, improving or installing a new heating system, adapting heating or lighting controls so that they are easier to use by a disabled person. The maximum grant assistance available is £36,000 per home.
- 4.3 The Council has a total budget of **£4.2M** to deliver DFG's across the borough. To manage this, a robust process is in place, which is set out in detail in **Appendix A**. In summary, expressions of interests for the grant are made to RCT's Social Services team, an Occupational Therapist (OT) from the team will undertake an assessment of need to determine the adaptations required at the home. Following the assessment, the OT will complete a referral form for the resident to receive the Disabled Facilities Grant, and send this to the Housing Grants team. The Housing Grants team will then process the referral. In 2018/19, **550 DFG referrals** were made to the RCT's Housing Grants team.

Request for support

- 4.4 On the 3rd July, MTCBC's Chief Executive formally wrote to RCT's Chief Executive requesting the opportunity to explore options for RCT

to deliver the DFG function on behalf of MTCBC. This request was made due to MTCBC disestablishing their DFG team (administration staff and surveyors), which currently consists of 2.4 FTE members of staff, who have been given an in principle agreement for Voluntary Early Retirement this financial year.

- 4.5 In response to the letter, a meeting was held with MTCBC and RCT colleagues, to further discuss the opportunity to enter a collaborative arrangement to deliver DFG's across Cwm Taf.

5.0 PROPOSAL

- 5.1 The following proposals are based on MTCBC's annual capital budget allocation being transferred to RCTCBC without any existing staff or TUPE liability. Furthermore, the proposals relate to the administration of the grant only and not to the current Occupational Therapist arrangements which will remain unchanged across both authorities.
- 5.2 Following a review, it was found that MTCBC's current DFG processes, **Appendix B**, are very similar to RCT's. Expressions of interests for the grant are made to MTCBC's Social Services team, an Occupational Therapist (OT) from the team will undertake an assessment of need to determine the adaptations required at the home. Following the assessment, the OT will complete a referral form for the resident to receive the DFG, and send this to the Housing Grants team to process.
- 5.3 The only difference between the two processes is the agency fee charge. MTCBC's agency fee is currently 12% where as RCT's is priced at 15%. As part of this arrangement, it will be essential that MTCBC's agency fee be brought in line with RCT for consistency purposes. This is something that has already been agreed with MTCBC.
- 5.4 A review whether there is sufficient capacity within the existing RCT staffing structure to administer MTCBC's grant has also been undertaken. The administrative responsibilities would include approving, managing, distributing and monitoring the grant on behalf of MTCBC. However, the reporting of annual DFG performance indicators and any statutory financial returns to Welsh Government, will remain the responsibility of MTCBC.
- 5.5 Based on the average number of referrals received per annum, which is **59** and the level of budget allocated, **£850,000**, inclusive of fees, the impact on the current administration team who oversee the processing of the grant is very low. As such, it is felt that the administration function could be easily absorbed within RCT's existing staffing structure.

- 5.6 However, due to existing surveyor capacity within the service, it is proposed that this aspect of the service is outsourced to Care and Repair. Care and Repair is a service for older, disabled and vulnerable people, guiding them through the often complex or daunting process of carrying out repairs and adaptations in their own home. The organisation will appoint a reputable contractor on behalf of the applicant to carry out the work and will oversee the work from start to finish. It is therefore proposed to extend Care and Repairs existing DFG arrangements with RCT to cover MTCBC's DFG's.
- 5.7 Care and Repair act as agents for the applicants applying for DFG's and will offer a hand holding service by assisting to complete the application form, collate financial information, appoint the contractor on behalf of the client and oversee the works to completion on site. Discussions have taken place between the Council and Care and Repair, who have confirmed that they have the capacity within the organisation to support this arrangement. The proposed new process is set out in **Appendix C**.
- 5.8 Based on this arrangement, if MTCBC received 59 referrals (based on 2018/2019 data), RCT would anticipate a fee income which will offset any additional costs the Council may incur in administering and monitoring MTCBC's scheme.
- 5.9 If this proposal is approved by Cabinet, a Service Level Agreement (SLA) will be created to formally establish the Council's role as the lead body for this project. It is anticipated that this collaborative arrangement is operational from January 2020.

6.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment screening test has been completed and this has indicated that a full Equality Impact assessment was not required

7.0 CONSULTATION

- 7.1 A consultation exercise is not required.

8.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

- 8.1 MTCBC's DFG Capital Programme is set annually, therefore the scheme would need to be implemented from January 2020 and reviewed annually in line with budget setting.

8.2 The arrangements for the transfer of the budget from MTCBC to RCT will be included in the SLA and will ensure that sufficient funds are transferred from MTCBC to RCT periodically, in advance of RCT paying Care and Repair. The treatment of any budget variances will also be included in the SLA.

8.3 The potential additional fee income will offset any additional costs the Council may incur in administering and monitoring MTCBC's scheme. The actual income levels will be monitored and included in the Council's Medium Term Financial Planning updates when appropriate.

9.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

9.1 Discussions have taken place with Legal Services and Finance to consider the legal implications and legislation and it is considered that the arrangements and terms and conditions of this funding can be administered under the Council's lawful powers. In addition, a Service Level Agreement (SLA) will be put in place between RCT and MTCBC. This will essentially pass on the accountability, risk and responsibility for the local delivery of this project to RCT and will also govern the grant monitoring and claim process.

9.2 There are no TUPE implications as a result of this proposal.

10.0 LINKS TO THE CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT

10.1 The Scheme will assist RCT to contribute to the delivery all three of the Council's Corporate Plan priorities of economy, people and place. The Scheme will also assist RCT and MTCBC to contribute to three of the seven wellbeing goals that 'The Well Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015' puts in place as follows:

1. A healthier Wales
2. A prosperous Wales
3. A Wales of cohesive communities

11.0 CONCLUSION

11.1 This report sets out proposals for Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council (RCT) to act as the Lead Body for the administration and monitoring of the mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) for Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council (MTCBC).

- 11.2 The proposals ensure that MTCBC meet their mandatory duty, whilst having very little impact on RCT current programme, with any potential fee income offsetting any additional costs the Council may incur in administering and monitoring MTCBC's scheme.
- 11.3 Furthermore, the proposals will help address findings set out in the Welsh Audit Office Housing Adaptations review. Specifically the recommendation for Councils to work together and with partner agencies to maximise both take up and the benefits of adaptations in supporting independence by pooling of resources and creating integrated delivery teams.

Other Information:-

Relevant Scrutiny Committee

Finance and Performance Scrutiny Committee

Contact Officer

Derek James (01443 281114)

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

17TH DECEMBER 2019

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**REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF PROSPERITY AND DEVELOPMENT IN
DISCUSSIONS WITH THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENTERPRISE,
DEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING, COUNCILLOR BEVAN**

Item:

Background Papers

None.

Officer to contact: Derek James (01443 281114)

APPENDIX A: RCT Disabled Facility Grant Process

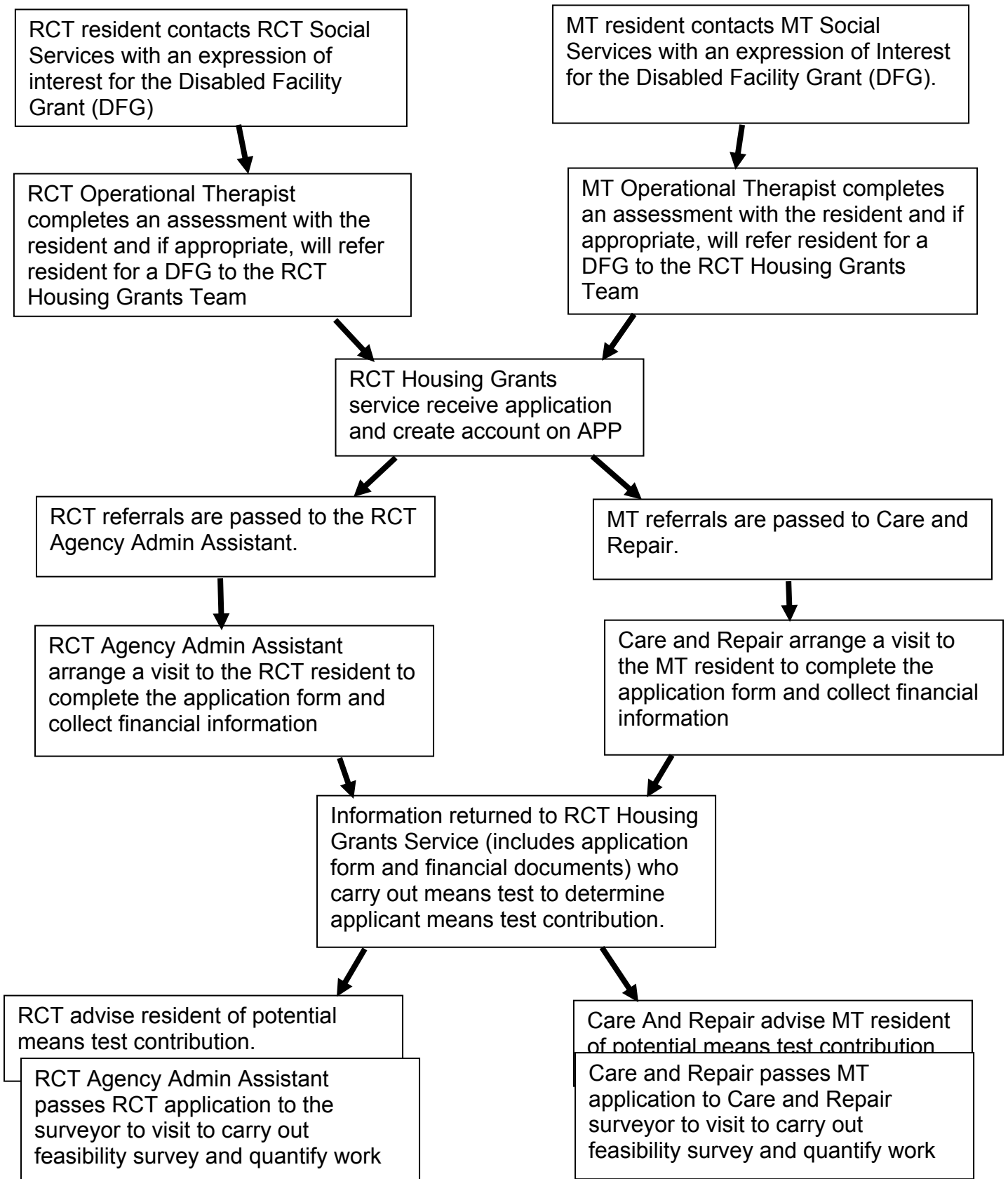
1. Electronic copy of the referral received from social services
2. Grant Application created on APP
3. Admin visit arranged to complete application forms and collect financial information
4. Means test carried out and client advised
5. Any calculated means test contribution is collected from applicant
6. Survey arranged for surveyor to carry out feasibility survey and quantify work
7. Schedule of work drawn up and scheme costed
8. Request certificate of title
9. Approve application
10. Allocate work to agency contractor, agree start date and programme of work
11. Work starts on site and over seen by surveyor
12. Surveyor to agree any unforeseen work, revise grant approval and valuate and process any interim payments
13. Work completes and is certified by surveyor
14. All final documentation collated
15. Final payment processed
16. Local land charge placed if cost of Grant is over £5k

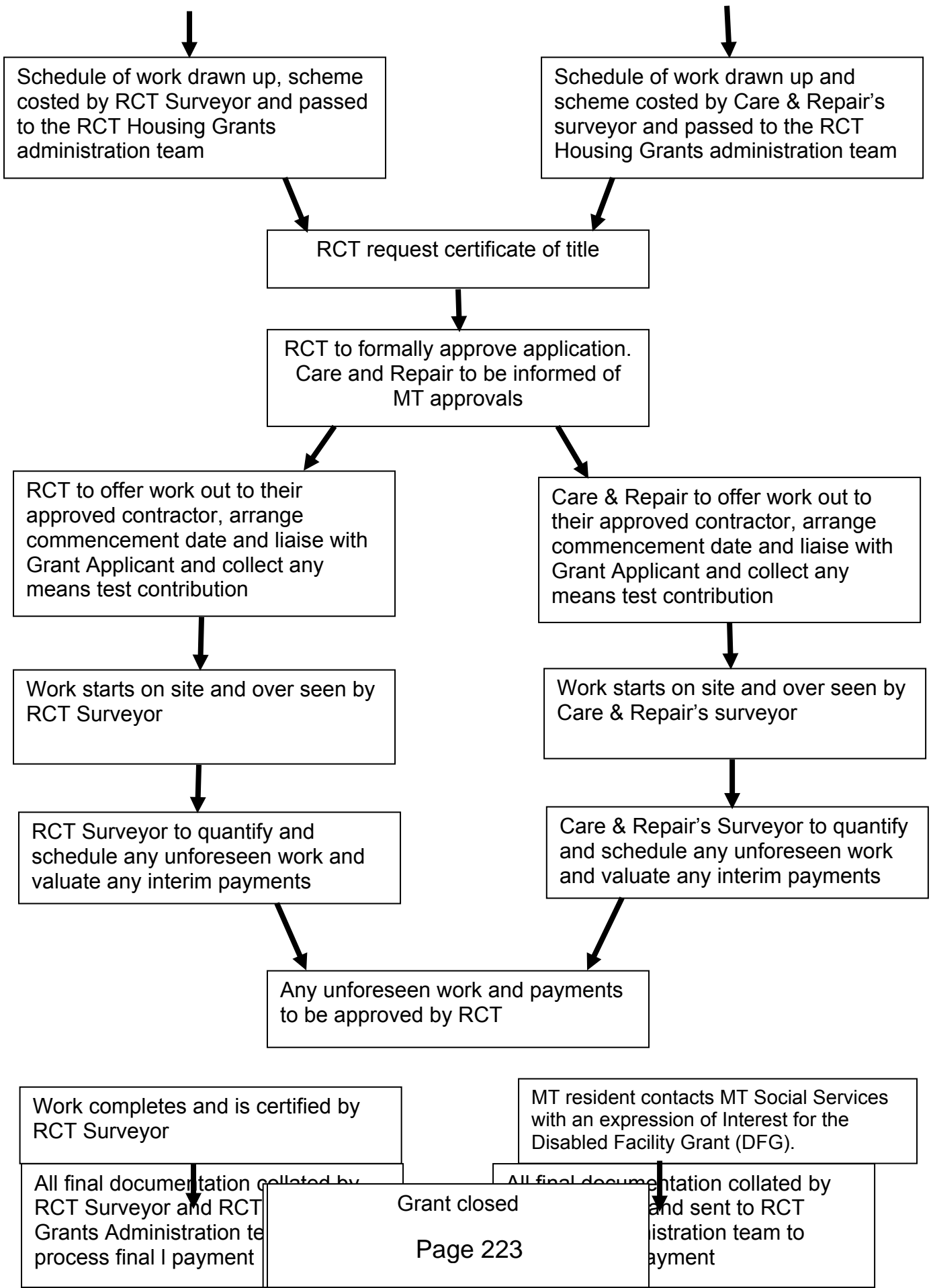
APPENDIX B: Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Process

1. Electronic copy of referral received from Social Services
2. Grant Application created on Tascomi
3. Survey arranged for surveyor to carry out feasibility of referral
4. Request certificate of title
5. Admin visit arranged to complete application forms and collect financial information
6. Means test carried out and client advised
7. Survey arranged for surveyor to carry out feasibility survey and quantify work
8. Schedule of work drawn up and scheme costed
9. Approve application
10. Arrange to meet client to go through grant approval, who the contractor is and agree a start date
11. Local land charge placed if cost of work is over £5k
12. Work starts on site and over seen by surveyor
13. Surveyor to agree any unforeseen work, revise grant approval and value and process any interim payments
14. Work completes and is certified by surveyor
15. All final documentation collated
16. Final payment processed

APPENDIX C: Proposed new process

New proposed DFG Process





RCT Housing Grants service
receive application and create
account on APP

By virtue of paragraph(s) 14 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

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