



CYNGOR BWRDEISTREF SIROL
RHONDDA CYNON TAF
COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

COMMITTEE SUMMONS

C Hanagan
Service Director of Democratic Services & Communication
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
The Pavilions
Cambrian Park
Clydach Vale, CF40 2XX

Meeting Contact: Hannah Williams - Council Business Unit (01443 424062)

YOU ARE SUMMONED to a meeting of **CLIMATE CHANGE CABINET STEERING GROUP** to be held at the **Committee Room 1, The Pavilions, Cambrian Park, Clydach Vale, Tonypany, CF40 2XX** on **TUESDAY, 28TH JANUARY, 2020** at **11.00 AM**.

Non Committee Members and Members of the public may request the facility to address the Committee at their meetings on the business listed although facilitation of this request is at the discretion of the Chair. It is kindly asked that such notification is made to Democratic Services by Friday, 24 January 2020 on the contact details listed above, including stipulating whether the address will be in Welsh or English.

AGENDA

**Page
No's**

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 approve as an accurate record, the minutes of the meeting of the Climate Change Control Steering Group held on 18th December 2019.

3. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

To receive the report of the Service Director, Democratic Services and Communication, outlining the proposed approach to resident engagement and communication in respect of climate change, working with national and local environmental groups, residents and businesses to raise awareness of and encourage positive behavioural change towards the environment.

11 - 22

4. TRANSPORTATION - HOW DO WE REDUCE OUR CARBON EMISSIONS AND CHANGE OUR MODES OF TRANSPORT?

To receive the report of the Group Director, Prosperity, Development and Frontline Services, providing the Steering Group with the current situation regarding carbon emissions and transport in order to identify the steps that can be taken to reduce such emissions.

23 - 32

5. CONSULTATION ON THE DRAFT WILDFLOWER GRASS MANAGEMENT POLICY FOR RHONDDA CYNON TAF

To receive the joint report of the Group Director, Prosperity, Development and Frontline Services and the Director, Public Health, Protection and Community Services, which seeks to consult the Steering Group on the draft Wildflower Grass Management Policy for Rhondda Cynon Taf.

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6. WHAT ACTION CAN BE TAKEN IN THE AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT AREAS, TO ENSURE AIR QUALITY IMPROVES ACROSS THE COUNTY BOROUGH

To receive the report of the Director, Public Health, Protection and Community Services, providing the Steering Group with the opportunity to consider what action can be taken in the Air Quality Management Areas, to ensure air quality improves across the County Borough.

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7. URGENT BUSINESS

To consider any items which the Chairman by reason of special circumstances is of the opinion should be considered at the Meeting as a matter of urgency.

Service Director of Democratic Services & Communication

Circulation:-

The Chair and Vice-Chair:

(County Borough Councillor R Lewis and County Borough Councillor M Webber respectively)

County Borough Councillors:

Councillor M Norris, Councillor A Crimmings, Councillor S Belzak and Councillor E Webster

Officers:

Chris Bradshaw, Chief Executive

Christian Hanagan, Service Director of Democratic Services & Communication

Nigel Wheeler, Group Director – Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services

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

Barrie Davies, Director of Finance & Digital Services

David Powell, Director of Corporate Estates

Lesley Lawson, Performance Manager

External Representation:

Friends of the Earth

Welcome to our Woods

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RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL CLIMATE CHANGE CABINET STEERING GROUP

Minutes of the meeting of the Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group held on Wednesday, 18 December 2019 at 2.00 pm at the Bryn Pica Landfill Site, Merthyr Road, Llwydcoed, Aberdare CF44 0BX.

County Borough Councillors - Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group Members in attendance:-

Councillor R Lewis Councillor M Norris
Councillor A Crimmings Councillor S Belzak
Councillor E Webster

Officers in attendance:-

Mr C Bradshaw, Chief Executive
Mr C Hanagan, Service Director of Democratic Services & Communication
Mr N Wheeler, Group Director – Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services
Mr D Powell, Director of Corporate Estates
Lawson, Performance Manager
Mr R Evans, Director of Human Resources
Mr M Crumbie, Head of Procurement Delivery
Ms E Dean, Environment Planner
Mr I Traylor, Service Director – Pensions, Procurement & Transactional Services
Mr S Lock, Head of Procurement and Energy Management
Mr S Vaughan, Service Manager E Procurement & Development

Invited External Representatives of the Steering Group:-

Ms H Richards - Friends of the Earth and Mr I Thomas - Welcome to our Woods

9 Apology for Absence

An apology for absence was received from County Borough Councillor M. Webber.

10 Declaration of Interest

In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, there were no declarations made pertaining to the agenda.

11 Minutes

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 18th November 2019 as an accurate reflection of the meeting subject to the following amendment:

- Minute No. 6 (third paragraph from the bottom) – Change 'no correlation' to 'almost complete correlation'.

12 Taffs Well Thermal Spring

With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, the Director, Corporate Estates and the Head of Energy Project Management provided the Steering Group with

information in respect of the current situation with regards to the Taffs Well Spring Renewable Energy Project and the proposed way forward for consideration.

The officers explained that Taffs Well Thermal Spring emerges on the eastern bank of the River Taff in Taffs Well in the south east part of the borough of Rhondda Cynon Taf and is the only natural thermal spring in Wales. The Steering Group were provided with the background to the project and were informed that work had been undertaken by the Council's Corporate Estates 'Energy' team in conjunction with two feasibility studies undertaken by the Friends of Taffs Well into developing the renewable energy potential of the Taffs Wells Spring in various ways. It was agreed to proceed on the basis of providing a heat network to replace the existing heating system at two adjacent RCT Council buildings. The officer continued by explaining that for the Taffs Well Park Pavilion, the intention was to replace the existing electric heating; and for Fynnon Taf Primary School, the plan was to replace or integrate with the existing gas fired system.

The officer advised that the cost of the development would unlikely exceed the expected range of £250k to £300k and by structuring the financial elements to maximise the Renewable Heat Allowance payment the pay-back on investment could be reduced by several years. Members were informed that the current expected core project was expected to save 37.1 tonnes of CO2.

One Member questioned whether the project would be subject to social media communication, to which the Service Director, Democratic Services and Communication confirmed that, as with all the positive work of the Steering Group, the project would be communicated with the public.

One Member praised the initiative and questioned whether the heat would be hydro powered, to which the officer explained that it would not be viable in its current form. However, it could be possible to extend the project in future.

The Chair thanked the officers for the comprehensive report and it was **RESOLVED:**

1. To recommend the approval of the project to Cabinet.

13 Future Work Programme

The Service Director, Democratic Services and Communication provided the Steering Group with the proposed list of matters requiring consideration by the Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group Work during the 2019-2020 Municipal Year.

The Service Director explained that the Work Programme would ensure that progress is monitored and action can be proposed to Cabinet to respond to the Cabinet's commitment for the Council to be Carbon Neutral by 2030, and to work with residents and businesses within the Borough to ensure the whole County Borough is Carbon Neutral as close as possible to the 2030 target.

The Service Director concluded by informing the Steering Group that the programme is flexible and that should they wish to add future reports, officers would work with them to produce reports for consideration following March 2020.

The Chair thanked the officer for the report and informed the Steering Group that Pontypridd Town Council were undertaking a piece of work in relation to biodiversity and as such, the Deputy Leader would add the topic as an item for discussion at the next meeting of the Community Liaison Committee in January 2020.

One Member raised concerns in respect of the 'Development of Infrastructure to support Low Carbon Vehicle Ownership' report, which was due to be considered by the Steering Group in January 2020. The Member spoke of the difficulty of installing the electric vehicle charging points throughout the Borough, with officers confirming that it would be discussed in depth at the next meeting.

The Steering Group **RESOLVED:**

1. To approve the Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group Work Programme for the 2019-2020 Municipal Year.

14 Local Procurement of Supplies and Services

The Service Manager for Procurement provided the Climate Change Steering Group with an overview of the Council's contracting arrangements and in particular how the Council is currently able to demonstrate spend with local suppliers within the boundary of Rhondda Cynon Taf.

The officer explained that all Public Procurement is governed by the EU Procurement Directives and UK Procurement Regulations, and that the Council has an obligation to comply with this Legal Framework.

The officer provided an overview of the information contained within Section 5 of the report, which summarised the money spent locally in 2018/19 and in the first six months of the 2019/20 financial year. The officer confirmed that the data had been summarised using the postcode of each supplier, and in order to provide a more detailed analysis of how much of the Council spend benefits the local economy of Rhondda Cynon Taf, a more detailed review of the spend with the Council's top 50 suppliers would take place. It was confirmed that an update on this work will be reported back to the Steering Group in June 2020.

In addition to the review of the top 50 suppliers, the Officer confirmed that work was also taking place in consultation with the Council's Regeneration Service which aims to map those businesses that are based within the boundary of the Council. The outcome of this work would be used to identify potential suppliers of goods and services in the future.

Discussion ensued around fair trade with one Member confirming that the Council is a fair trade Council.

The Chair thanked the officer for the informative report and took the opportunity to speak of a robust piece of work undertaken by one of the Council's Graduate Officers to explore options for maximising Community Benefits derived from procurement contracts. Following this work Cabinet agreed that Community Benefits will now be incorporated into all relevant procurement exercises.

The Steering Group **RESOLVED:**

1. To agree that further work takes place to review the Council's top 50 suppliers with the aim of establishing the value that these arrangements have to our local economy;

2. To note the work that is taking place to develop a detailed understanding of the businesses that operate within the County Borough; and
3. That an update on these actions be presented back to the Group in June 2020.

15 Elimination of single use plastics in all Council contracts and premises

The Head of Procurement provided the Steering Group with an overview of the current guidance that is in place to support organisations when seeking to eliminate single use plastics.

The officer referred Members to Section 4 of the report, where the Waste Hierarchy was outlined, which set out a hierarchy of options for managing waste in terms of what is best for the environment. Members were informed that when reviewing the use of single-use plastics, the Waste Framework Directive (2008) provides a useful and valuable waste hierarchy.

The officer then referred Members to Section 5 of the report, where a table of the current use of single use plastics had been identified, along with examples of where single use products have been replaced with alternative products. The Steering Group were advised that the next step was to undertake a detailed and thorough audit of the areas with the aim of identifying quantities, evaluating the current disposal arrangements in place and overlaying the waste hierarchy principles, in consultation with suppliers to put in place appropriate alternative products. The outcome of this work will be presented to the Steering Group in April 2020, along with an action plan that aims to eliminate the use of single use plastics as far as is practicably possible by 2020.

The Chair thanked the officer for the detailed report and commented that it evidenced an honest picture of where the Council are and the issues experienced.

Discussion took place in respect of the use of single use plastics, with one Member stating that schools should be a flagship for the community. The Member identified potential schemes to complement the idea:

- Reward Scheme for reusable container at schools;
- Refillable water stations in place of vending machines; and
- Engaging with Eco Committees in schools

Members of the group also discussed and agreed with the principle of educating all staff on this important issue.

In relation to water stations, the Group Director, Prosperity, Development and frontline Services confirmed the Council's intentions of reviewing where these could be installed in each of the Council's major town centres. Furthermore, work is taking place to establish where refill stations can be provided in consultation with local businesses.

The Chair thanked the Members of the Group for their input.

The Climate Change Steering Group **RESOLVED:**

1. To note the contents of the report, in particular the importance of ensuring that the principles of the Waste Hierarchy are applied when establishing alternative products to single use plastics; and;

2. To note that a future report providing the outcome of the audit will be provided to the Group in April 2020.

16 Recycling with Rhondda Cynon Taf

The Group Director, Prosperity, Development and Frontline Services provided the Climate Change Steering Group with the report, which contained information on the recycling performance for the first 6 months of 2019/20, the new Materials Recovery Facility, future developments at Bryn Pica and potential legislative changes.

The Group Director explained that the Council has a statutory recycling target of 64%, which is set by Welsh Government and that failure to meet the target would result in the Council receiving a substantial fine.

Members were referred to Section 4 of the report, which outlined RCT's performance during the first 6 months of the financial year and evidenced that RCT had achieved the target set out by Welsh Government and were in a good position for the remainder of the year. The Group Director advised that the next target for the Council would be the 2024/2025 target of 70% and felt that it could be changed to 80%. He went on to discuss how the target could be achieved by improving the current performance and with the provision of the new MRF at Bryn Pica. The Group Director advised that of the need to put together a marketing campaign informing residents that enforcement action would be taken if they do not recycle, should Members recommend the change to Cabinet.

The Group Director spoke of the initiatives RCT had in place to improve recycling such as the interactive education centre in Bryn Pica, the Anaerobic Digestion Facility, the Mattress Recycling Facility and the Leachate Treatment Plant. Members were informed that the ambition was to develop an Eco Park on site, which would develop a recycling process for hard plastics whereby plastics are grinded down and washed to either sell the material or turn it into a product on site.

The Chair thanked the Group Director for the comprehensive report and praised RCT's simple recycling collection method in comparison to other Local Authorities.

Discussions ensued around black bag waste and the potential to further reduce its collection. The Group Director advised that although it was anticipated, fly tipping did not increase when the black bag collections were reduced. He confirmed that there were currently no plans to reduce the collection further, but instead, there was a need to educate the community on the appropriate waste to dispose of into the black bags.

The Chair spoke positive of the proposal and noted that RCT would lead the way in being the first Local Authority in Wales to set the target to 80%.

The Steering Group **RESOLVED:**

1. To recommend to Cabinet to change the recycling target to 80% by 2024/25

17 Urgent Business

- The representative from Welcome to Our Woods took the opportunity to provide the Steering Group with information in respect of a feasibility project, named 'Skyline', which had been funded by the Friends Provident Foundation. The representative spoke of the work undertaken across local communities to explore the history, meaning and visions of each valley.

Members were provided with detailed handouts of the project and agreed to receive further updates at future Committees.

The Chair thanked the representative for the information and spoke of the importance of Third Sector Groups leading the way on key initiatives.

- It was agreed that it would be beneficial for the Steering Group to undertake a tour of Bryn Pica in the summer.

This meeting closed at 3.30 pm

**COUNCILLOR R LEWIS
CHAIR.**

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CLIMATE CHANGE CABINET STEERING GROUP

28TH JANUARY 2020

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES AND COMMUNICATION IN DISCUSSION WITH THE CABINET'S CLIMATE CHANGE CHAMPION (COUNCILLOR RHYS LEWIS)

Author: Chris Davies, Corporate Policy & Consultation Manager
01443 424069

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to inform the Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group of proposed approaches to resident/community engagement and communication. This includes businesses and representatives from national and local environmental groups to raise awareness of the importance of behavioural change in and encourage in respect of Climate Change, encourage participation at a community level and promote the proactive work of the Council and community groups.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group:

- 2.1 Consider the information contained in the report and the proposed engagement approach subject to any amendments and support the proposed areas of focus:
- A) Communications & Social Media activity
 - B) Developing a behavioural change campaign
 - C) Facilitating Involvement
 - D) Engaging future generations
- 2.3 Agree for officers to work in partnership with key environmental stakeholders and groups to develop this approach going forward, and seek their engagement in specific communications and engagement activity; and
- 2.3 Agree to receive updates on progress at future meetings.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To ensure that the work of the Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group is driven by the involvement of all key stakeholders, raising awareness of best practice and ultimately encouraging residents and communities to change their behaviour. To support this work, the Council has an important role to play in leading by example.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The Council, through the development of a new Corporate Plan, is committed to becoming a Carbon Neutral organisation by 2030 and to work with residents and businesses within the Borough to ensure the whole County Borough is Carbon Neutral as close as possible to the 2030 target.
- 4.2 The Cabinet Steering Group has been established to ensure an Authority-wide approach to issues of Climate Change and the Council becoming a carbon neutral organisation.

The terms of reference of the group state that the Group will;

- *Provide the opportunity for persons, interested parties, and groups who live in Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council the ability to engage in the wider response of the community to Climate Change;*

- 4.3 In order to achieve its ambitious 2030 target requires the Council to work with communities and groups such as, Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace and other local environmental groups to help to engage residents and businesses in ways that will encourage them to adapt and change their behaviour.
- 4.4 The Council has already started working with the Council's Youth Council on the matter of climate change. These discussions have already indicated the priority placed upon tackling climate change by young people and the leading role they wish to play. This will be further supported by inviting school eco committees to get involved.
- 4.5 This report outlines an approach to community engagement that will help the Council to deliver the necessary actions to respond to the challenge of Climate Change and in doing so, support businesses, communities and residents to reduce their environmental impact and so the Carbon Footprint of the County Borough.

5. **PROPOSED APPROACH**

- 5.1 The Council already undertakes a number of effective engagement approaches, which utilises a variety of communication channels and methods. It is proposed that the Council utilises these approaches, but also complements them with a range of specific campaigns, engagement events and stakeholder involvement to effectively support and persuade the participation necessary from residents of Rhondda Cynon Taf to initiate in the medium to longer term, the appropriate changes in their current behaviour.
- 5.2 It is proposed to involve as wide a range of stakeholders, as possible, in the development of these proposals but also the delivery of the wider conversation. To achieve this the first step will be to identify the key stakeholders and identify the most appropriate engagement methods to employ. **The contribution of the Steering Group's community members is sought to support this.**
- 5.3 The development of future approaches will need to consider how best we can encourage the residents of Rhondda Cynon Taf to take a personal lead in reducing their carbon footprint.
- 5.4 It will need to consider how the Council can work with national and local environmental groups to engage residents and businesses to adapt and change. ***Approaches might include:***

5.5 **Communications & Social Media activity**

Through the development of a dedicated communication plan the Council would connect communications activity with key milestones and delivery of projects currently being considered.

- 5.6 The Council proactively promotes services which are contributing to the positive progress already undertaken by the Council to reduce its carbon footprint. However, it is evident from the contributions of Steering Group Members that this positive progress is not reaching individuals and groups who are already championing change and making an impact at a local level.
- 5.7 In order to raise awareness and enable behavioural change, the Council's social media and marketing expertise would be used to develop targeted campaigns for specific audiences, as well as more general awareness raising of the impact of Climate Change events to RCT residents and businesses. **Key actions will include:**

- *Communicating how the Council is changing how it operates and delivers services and provide to empower residents to take the lead from our proactive lead;*
- *Playing the leading role in support the Council's behavioural change campaign;*
- *Developing a dedicated #hashtagRCTClimateChange;*
- *Milestone days to encourage greater dialogue about Climate Change;*
- *Implementing 'Did you know'? campaigns;*
- *Wider support for engagement events and activities;*
- *Promoting good work already taking place at a local level; and*
- *Connecting with national groups who support behavioural change.*

5.8 Communicating behavioural change

Social Marketing: Definition

Social marketing is designed to create social change, not to directly benefit a brand. Using traditional marketing techniques, it raises awareness of a given problem or cause, and aims to convince an audience to change their behaviours.

Social marketing “promotes” a behaviour or lifestyle that benefits society, in order to create the desired change. This benefit to the public good is always the primary focus. And instead of showing how a matter is better than competing issues, social marketing “competes” against undesirable thoughts, behaviours, or actions.

Well-executed social marketing captures attention, and spreads awareness about a social issue, through creativity and emotion. Most importantly, it presents a compelling, simple way to make the world better, and makes this beneficial behaviour more desirable than any “competing” behaviour. Through these elements, social marketing is able to successfully “promote” a beneficial behaviour.

- 5.9 The Council has a strong track record in delivering behavioural change campaigns, e.g. communications activities have proactively supported the Council’s recycling improvements and the implementation of service change.
- 5.10 It is proposed that a behaviour change marketing campaign to include story board visuals, digital content, social media messaging be developed for comment and feedback from the Steering Group.**
- 5.11 More generally, a range of social media channels can be used to communicate the Climate Change agenda and the support of stakeholders will be key to sign post to social media discussions, already taking place.

5.12 Below are examples of campaigns already undertaken by the Council, which have supported positive recycling changes and are supporting the profile of issues such as water re-fill stations.

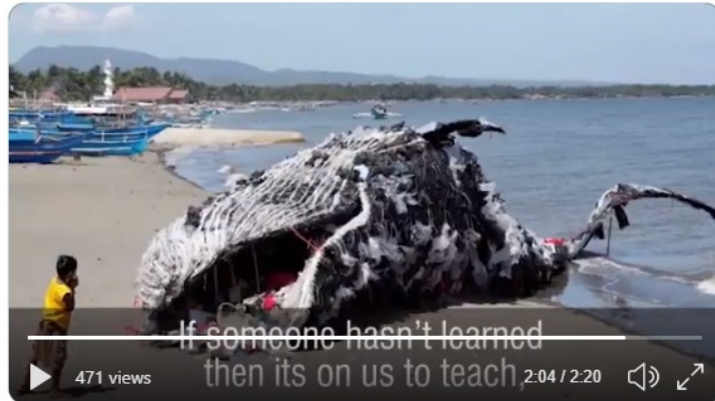




RCT Council ✓
@RCTCouncil

This rap, written for the Council by our very own Treorchy lad Josh, that was launched @TreorchyComp today says it all....Think about the earth - Recycling it's in our own hands! @Recycle4Wales #EveryonesDoingIT #StopThinkRecycle socsi.in/eCpLo

socsi.in/plbV9



3:02 PM · Sep 23, 2019 · Orlo



RCT Council ✓
@RCTCouncil

Gwauncelyn Primary School is Doing IT by helping promote a new scheme, encouraging schools to ask pupils to use refillable water bottles & refill on the go - Recycling, it's in our own hands! #EveryonesDoingIT #StopThinkRecycle socsi.in/Pqg18 #RecycleWeek @Recycle4Wales



5:31 PM · Sep 25, 2019 · Orlo



5.13 Developing a conversation

It is intended that the Council's engagement approach on this matter will be 'conversational' from the outset, seeking to build understanding first, which in turn will support subsequent engagement and participation at a local level.

It is proposed that as well as holding an ongoing conversation with residents and communities about Climate Change, they will be invited and encouraged to participate in focussed discussions on the Council's specific climate change initiatives as they arise, e.g. community tree planting, supporting initiatives to eliminate single use plastics and car free days.

The conversation will be underpinned by a range of communications and engagement activities.

- 5.14 It is proposed that the conversations will be underpinned by a **Central Climate Change** web portal to which all residents and stakeholders can be signposted. An interim portal will be put in place within a month, which will contain information that promotes and raises awareness of current projects, best practice and any case studies from across RCT as well as national and global events.

It is suggested that the development of this interim site be used as one of the mechanisms to engage young people. Young people's representatives could be invited to contribute ideas for its design and content and also to help develop an RCT Climate Change brand.

5.15 By linking to national bodies' websites and relevant Welsh Government Initiatives, the wider opportunities for the public to realise their personal responsibilities and the changes they can make will be amplified.

5.16 Wider web content can also be used to host online discussion forums or message boards and also host information about the Climate Change Steering Group, engagement activities, milestones and successes.

5.17 Involvement

As well as providing information about the Council's approach to Climate Change and associated issues, we will need to ask people what their Climate priorities are; Is the Council taking the right approach? What else could the Council be doing?

5.18 As well as the involvement of Environmental Groups, an ongoing conversation will need to progress with the following groups/individuals;

- *Generally all residents Young people e.g. through [The Rhondda Cynon Taf Youth Forum](#) and through schools and Youth Groups*
- *Partner organisations through the PSB*
- *Older People e.g. through the ['Fiftyplus' Older People's Forum](#)*
- *The RCT Disability Forum*
- *[The Council's Citizens' Panel](#)*
- *[Local Partnerships and Communities Together 'PACT' meetings Health Forums](#)*
- *Service User Groups e.g. Transport, [Carers](#)*
- *[Community/Voluntary groups](#)*
- *Welsh Language Groups*
- *Community and Town Councils*
- *Councillors, MPs, AMs*
- *Businesses*
- *Staff*

5.19 The Council's Overview & Scrutiny Committee is currently developing an [Involvement Strategy](#) to ensure all services prioritise engagement with communities and service users as part of their day-to-day approach to service delivery. Subject to agreement by the Council's Cabinet, this document will play a role in supporting the engagement activity of the Climate Change Steering Group.

5.20 The Council's Community Council Liaison Committee is already scheduled to consider this matter at its first meeting in 2020. The participation of community engagement will be key and should seek to support future projects at a local level.

5.21 The way in which the groups or individuals will be involved and the approach taken will be dependent on subject. An engagement Plan will be developed with the community representatives of the Steering Group.

This could include:

- Face to face engagement events;
- Road show events to raise awareness;
- Focus group events which lead to participation in a project;
- Work with community groups to facilitate conversations and links to develop future projects; and
- 'Cafe style' events to sign-post to future information.

5.22 Face to face engagement events could be used across the Borough to raise awareness and promote behavioural change with our residents.

5.23 The Council facilitates positive engagement by undertaking these events in town centres, at Council venues or other venues in the community which have a connection to the subject matter, or have a cross spectrum of residents in attendance.

5.24 Any future approach will need to include engagement at a community level, to support project delivery in areas such tree planting and improved recycling performance as examples.

5.25 Through the knowledge gained by working with stakeholders and community groups, there will be the opportunity to utilise targeted events to focus on encouraging wider participation in specific areas of behavioural change – car sharing might be an example.

5.26 The potential engagement opportunities referenced will feed into the wider planned communications activities.

5.27 As community leaders, the wider engagement and involvement of all elected members is crucially important to the effective engagement of communities across all of Rhondda Cynon Taf.

5.28 Seeking the engagement of elected members in leading project delivery and those conversations with residents will make a positive difference and enhance progress. Examples such as the Rhyd-cycle and Green Village initiative led by members demonstrates the positive lead Councillors will play.

5.29 Involving Future Generations

The Council's Climate Change Champion has already requested that the Council's Youth Forums are involved and are able to advise and support the work of the Steering Group. There are a number of Youth Forums across RCT that cater for 11-25 year olds.

5.30 One of the ways of facilitating this will be through the sharing of the Steering Group's [work programme](#) through the Council's structured youth forum arrangements.

5.31 The Cabinet Office has already undertaken discussions with colleagues in the Council's Youth Engagement & Participation Service to facilitate engagement with young people who are engaged more widely with the Council's Youth Services.

5.32 To achieve this, the Council will work closely with RCT schools and our youth services to develop such approaches with young people. Following this dialogue, proposals will be developed to engage a larger audience of young people. This work will need to complement schools' work as part of their own eco committees and also the [Eco-schools programme organised by Keep Wales Tidy](#).

6. NEXT STEPS

Key to delivering the intended approach will be to ensure that individuals and groups who are taking a proactive role already in our communities connect their conversations into the work of the Council.

- Continue to promote the positive progress the Council is making;
- Connect communication messages with current online conversations; and residents taking a proactive interest in the subject of climate change;
- To bring Steering Group members and key stakeholders together to consider how networks can be utilised to begin engagement;
- Develop marketing options to deliver the necessary behavioural change required;
- Develop a calendar of events to begin our conversations;
- Engage with local and national environmental campaigns;
- Develop strategic, digital, web and social media; and
- Target messaging to Council employees.

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1. The engagement approach will provide opportunities for a diverse group of residents and stakeholders to get involved, providing a range of methods including online, accessible events and specific engagement for targeted groups, such as young people, older people and the Council's Disability Forum.

8. RESIDENT ENGAGEMENT

- 8.1 The recommendations outlined in the report seek to develop an approach to Communication, Engagement and Involvement that will inform a plan to mitigate the effects of Climate Change in Rhondda Cynon Taf and that will encourage everyone that lives, works and visits Rhondda Cynon Taf to change their behaviour

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

- 9.1 There are no financial implications directly aligned to this report.

10 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 10.1 There are no legal implications aligned to this report.

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

- 11.1 The Council has committed to becoming a Carbon Neutral organisation by 2030 and to work with residents and businesses within the Borough to ensure the whole County Borough is Carbon Neutral as close as possible to the 2030 target. This supports the priorities of the Council's current Corporate Plan as well as the proposals which are the subject of engagement in the new Corporate Plan.
- 11.2 This work is fully reflecting the Sustainable Development principles of the Well-being of Future Generations Act and will contribute to all seven National Goals, with more immediate direct contributions to a Globally Responsible Wales, a more Resilient Wales, a Healthy Wales and a Wales of Cohesive Communities.

12. CONCLUSION

- 12.1 The report outlines a proposed approach to resident engagement and communication in respect of climate change, working with a wide range of stakeholders to raise awareness of and encourage positive behavioural change towards the environment in RCT.

12.2 The overall aim is to provide the opportunity for persons, interested parties, and groups who live in Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council the ability to engage in the wider response of the community to climate change.

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CLIMATE CHANGE STEERING GROUP

28TH JANUARY 2020

REPORT OF THE GROUP DIRECTOR OF PROSPERITY, DEVELOPMENT AND FRONTLINE SERVICES IN DISCUSSION WITH THE CABINET'S CLIMATE CHANGE CHAMPION (COUNCILLOR RHYS LEWIS)

TRANSPORTATION – HOW DO WE REDUCE OUR CARBON EMISSIONS AND CHANGE OUR MODES OF TRANSPORT?

**Author: Roger Waters, Service Director Frontline Services.
Tel 01443 494702**

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to appraise the Steering Group of the current situation regarding carbon emissions and transport and to identify the steps that can be taken to reduce such emissions.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Steering Group:

- 2.1 Note the content of the report.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Transport is a derived demand that operates across county boundaries. Whilst there are steps that individual councils can take to decarbonise transport, such steps will be more effective where they are delivered under a coordinated strategy on a regional or national basis, where all parties are focussed on achieving a common goal.
- 3.2 Transportation of goods and people around Wales is fundamental to our current economic model and our well-being as a nation. It is an integral part of most economic, social, environmental and cultural activity. With transport accounting for 14% of Wales' carbon emissions, it is essential that the sector is made more resilient, efficient and low carbon in a cost-effective way, if we are to meet the Welsh Government's requirement to reduce overall carbon emissions by at least 80% (or higher) by 2050.

- 3.3 Welsh Government strategy for reducing carbon is set out in Prosperity for All: A Low Carbon Wales;
https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-06/low-carbon-delivery-plan_1.pdf

This establishes a commitment to;

....putting Wales at the forefront of a shift towards active travel and a low carbon public transport system which is accessible to all and contributes to liveable and sustainable communities. This is backed by a bold ambition for a zero emissions bus, taxi and private hire vehicle fleet by 2028.

- 3.4 The document anticipates metro style public transport services offering a sustainable transport alternative to the private car and active travel becoming the preferred option for short journeys that are currently predominantly being done by car. In addition, there is an expectation that the take up in electric vehicle usage will accelerate with the Welsh Government supporting investment in electric vehicle charging infrastructure. The approach can be summarised as follows;

- Behaviour Change Measures (Demand Reduction Policies)
- Uptake of Electric Vehicles
- Vehicle and Fuel Efficiency Measures

- 3.5 *Prosperity for All* establishes high level policies covering carbon emissions across the entire Welsh community and economy with the expectation that the *Welsh Transport Strategy* (anticipated to be published late 2020) will flesh out these policies and provide the detail and context required to inform local and regional transport policy and delivery plans.

- 3.6 RCT is proactive at a regional level through the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal (CCRCD) and the Cardiff Capital Region Transport Authority (CCRTA), as well as driving forward projects and proposals that are more specific to RCT.

- 3.7 Working with the WLGA; evidence was recently submitted to the Welsh Government's *Economy, Infrastructure and Skills Scrutiny Committee* regarding *De-Carbonising Transport* and *Prosperity for All*.

- 3.8 This evidence was presented on 13th November;

<http://senedd.assembly.wales/documents/g5732/Public%20reports%20pack%20Wednesday%2013-Nov-2019%2009.25%20Economy%20Infrastructure%20and%20Skills%20Committee.pdf?T=10>

- 3.9 As can be seen from the evidence, the commitment to reduce carbon emissions by at least 80% by 2050 is extremely challenging. As indicated earlier, Transport is a derived demand; users of transport are primarily consuming the service not because of its direct benefits, but because they

wish to access other services; employment, health care, education, retail, leisure, tourism or for the delivery of goods and services.

3.10 Transport growth is linked to the economy, as the economy grows, so does the demand to travel. Initiatives such as City Deal exist to drive economic growth and close the significant gap in economic activity that exists between south east Wales and the regional economies across the rest of the UK. A successful City Deal will create a more prosperous region and will tend to lead to greater travel demand.

3.11 RCT is engaged in numerous programmes of works, many of which have positive implications for reducing emissions and helping to de-carbonise transport. These programmes should continue at pace. For example:

- Making Better Use Programme; creating bus priority, increasing the efficiency of our network and reducing delays at junctions, enhancing traffic signals to include latest SCOOT and MOVA controllers.
- Safe Routes to School / Safe Routes in Communities; to encourage walking and cycling – improved pedestrian and cycle facilities, new and upgraded crossings for pedestrians and cyclists, drop kerbs, cycle storage, traffic calming, 20mph limits, etc.
- Bus Corridor Enhancements; reduce journey times, improving bus stops and shelters, providing bus boarding points to allow step free access, maintaining our bus stations and providing passengers with information on bus services.
- Parking Enforcement; RCT employs 14 Civil Parking Enforcement Officers and 2 mobile camera vehicles to deal with obstructive parking, particularly outside schools, on zebra crossings and in marked bus stops.
- Subsidised bus services; whilst approximately 92% of public transport services are run on a commercial basis, the council provides £625,630, which combined with Welsh Government funding and other cross boundary contributions enables a sum of £1,125,280 to be committed to contracted bus services to provide bus services in locations or at times of the days or week when commercial services are not viable. In addition £7,435,270 is spent in RCT every year to provide approximately 60,000 residents with concessionary bus travel.
- Park and Ride; the council has established an excellent track record in developing and delivering park and ride opportunities at railway stations, notably Abercynon P&R extension providing over 300 extra spaces in 2019.
- Active Travel; RCT has delivered numerous Active Travel schemes across RCT, the most recent being Llantrisant Community Route and links. This will be a key area of growth in future enabling shorter journeys that are currently made by car to transfer to walking or cycling, reducing congestion and vehicle emissions and improving health and wellbeing.

4 OPPORTUNITIES FOR RCT

4.1 Metro

- 4.1.1 Metro has the potential to offer a credible, alternative and sustainable transport opportunity to enable car users to switch to public transport for many journeys.
- 4.1.2 The Cardiff Capital Region City Deal has facilitated an investment of around £740 million towards the initial stages of transforming the transport network in south east Wales to create a Metro system. As part of the Wales-wide rail franchise, Transport for Wales (TfW) (a wholly owned arms-length company of Welsh Government) has let the 15-year £5Bn rail franchise to Keolis Amey, operating as Transport for Wales Rail Services.
- 4.1.3 The initial investment will secure full electrification of the Core Valley Lines (CVL) within Rhondda Cynon Taf (and to Merthyr) together with new rolling stock. This will provide an electrified rail service with 4 trains per hour running to Treherbert, Aberdare and Merthyr, towards the end of 2022. The changes will also see the CVL rail lines, stations, etc (which includes those in RCT) coming under the direct control of TfW and transferring from Network Rail during 2020.
- 4.1.4 There will also be a range of complimentary improvements to stations with potential for additional stations and park and ride expansion. A new rail depot is being developed at Taffs Well which will also accommodate the control centre for these rail services.
- 4.1.5 Related Initiatives; As part of the joint City Deal/Welsh Government Metro Plus programme, a new integrated transport hub will be created at Porth. This will be the catalyst for further regeneration of the town. The scheme will enable bus and rail integration linking bus services from Rhondda Fach, Rhondda Fawr and from the Gilfach/Tonyrefail area with rail services at Porth. This integration will build on Metro principles and allow interchange with the 4 rail services an hour that will run each way from 2023.
Further work is in hand to consider the merits of creating a mass transit link from Cardiff, through the new developments in NW Cardiff and towards Beddau and Pontyclun in RCT.
Studies have also commenced to consider extensions of the electrified rail service proposed for Aberdare, to extend towards Hirwaun.
A new station is being promoted close to the new Department of Work and Pensions Offices at Trefforest Industrial Estate.
Other studies are progressing to consider options for strategic park and ride facilities along the A470 and A4119 corridors and at other sites throughout the Rhondda, Cynon and Taf areas. Other related initiatives will also be developed.
- 4.1.6 Metro must be more than rail and will need to integrate all forms of transport (including ticketing and information) to create a comprehensive, joined-up

and coordinated network of routes and services across; rail, tram, bus, cycling, walking, whilst promoting more sustainable ways of fuelling private cars, freight and service vehicles.

- 4.1.7 Bus is key to extending the reach of Metro to all communities, typically carrying 100 million passengers in Wales every year (4x more than rail). De-regulation of buses in 1985 has meant that bus operators such as Stagecoach, NAT, Edwards, etc are responsible for planning their networks, the routes, the frequencies, the stops, the fares, the days of the week and the time of day during which they run the services. This means that it is more challenging to plan and coordinate services between operators and to integrate with other transport modes. Welsh Government is currently promoting legislation which will enable buses to be regulated where it has not been possible to achieve satisfactory coordination by other measures. Commonly known as franchising, it may offer coordination benefits, but it should not obscure the fact that the main challenge for buses is road congestion.
- 4.1.8 Ongoing traffic growth on constrained highway networks means that bus journeys are becoming slower and less reliable as roads become more and more congested. Operators are having to extend their timetables to maintain journey time compliance (or face fines from the Traffic Commissioner) and introduce additional vehicles into their rosters to maintain headways. This adds significant operational costs which are compounded by loss of income due to lower patronage. Costs are passed on to passengers or to the local authority as subsidies or the services are terminated.
- 4.1.9 This is a vicious circle which will need significant capital and revenue investment to make bus attractive and grow patronage, moving people out of their cars and onto passenger transport. Difficult decisions will need to be made regarding respective priority and allocation of road space.
- 4.1.10 Against a challenging commercial backdrop, progress is being made across the region with electric buses being introduced by Stagecoach, Newport Bus and Cardiff Bus. Other commercial services are mainly being provided on newer vehicles many of which will be Euro 6 compliant. This is partly driven by public sector bus quality requirements when procuring subsidised bus services.
- 4.1.11 The financial commitments facilitated through the Cardiff Capital Regional City Deal in developing the Metro are hugely advantageous to RCT and provide a framework on which Metro will grow and expand across the region. Rhondda Cynon Taf has the opportunity to maximise the advantages presented by these early transformational investments.
- 4.1.12 The Council is seeking to develop complimentary sustainable measures to stimulate economic growth and to make our communities more prosperous, building on the foundations of Metro in RCT. The Council has delivered significant growth in the number of park and ride spaces available

and will continue with this work in conjunction with Welsh Government and TfW.

4.1.13 Active Travel enhancements will be accelerated to enable active travel links to stations and interchanges and between our communities and town centres. This will also encourage active and healthy lifestyles aligned with Corporate Plan priorities. Options for bike hire, including electric bikes will be considered.

4.1.14 Land use planning through the development of the new Local Development Plan should seek to focus development on transport hubs to maximise the benefits of Metro.

4.2 Electric Vehicles (EV) and Charging Infrastructure.

4.2.1 The Council is currently working with the CCRCD/CCRTA to develop a regional approach to the introduction of EV charging infrastructure across strategic Council owned sites and on a strategy to convert all taxis to EV by the Welsh Government target date of 2028.

4.2.2 The Taxi Strategy for South East Wales was recently approved by the CCRTA and will involve further work across the ten councils and their respective Taxi Licencing teams and taxi operators;
<https://www.cardiffcapitalregion.wales/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/item-6-taxi-strategy-for-south-east-wales-appendix-1.pdf>

4.2.3 The Cardiff Metro Infrastructure Review includes independent review of the area and offers a number of recommendations regarding a way forward which are currently proceeding;
<https://www.cardiffcapitalregion.wales/wp-tent/uploads/2019/02/appendix-3-cardiff-metro-infrastructure-review-cenex.pdf>

4.2.4 Further work on commercialisation is being concluded and is likely to lead to a procurement process involving numerous councils (and potentially Welsh Government) to secure a commercial delivery partner. This will provide an initial framework of public EV charging points upon which the commercial providers will be expected to develop a wider offer. It is notable that commercial charging points are starting to be delivered in local supermarkets across RCT.

4.2.5 Three bus companies have recently been granted funding to develop electric bus services in the region, Newport Bus, Cardiff Bus, Stagecoach Caerphilly. The expansion of the services, which involve investment in new buses and charging infrastructure, will be an aspiration for the region.

4.2.6 The Council's own fleet is predominantly diesel based and will itself be subject to review with the intention of moving towards more sustainable forms of fuel as the market for suitable vehicles matures and cost effective and fit for purpose solutions emerge. The Council is currently trialling hybrid and EV options and will monitor the potential for other sustainable fuel solutions for larger fleet vehicles (such as hydrogen).

4.2.7 Use of pool cars to reduce internal travel costs has been effective and has also lead to informal car sharing or use of public transport as staff no longer need to have their own car available at work for work related travel. The extent of this impact is not known and there is not a formal car-sharing initiative in place.

4.3 Complementary Strategies and Demand Management

4.3.2 Home to School Transport

4.3.3 The Council also commissions significant volumes of transport services through its Home to School transport commitments. Whilst the options to convert these services to greener energy are limited, RCT's approach to school transport offers significant benefits for sustainable travel, particularly in respect of;

- The Council's generous eligibility criteria means that proportionately more pupils travel to school by bus than would be the case if the Council operated at statutory distances and age groups. Consequently, the Council operates the largest schools transport operation in the country meaning that far less parents feel the need to transport their pupils to school. This reduces overall carbon emissions from the "school run" and also has the beneficial effect of reducing the amount of traffic on our roads and levels of congestion – this has benefits for air quality.
- The Council operates the most efficient school transport operation in the country with its vehicle occupancy rates (i.e. number of pupils per bus) being the highest in Wales. Combined with smart route planning, this means that the service is provided with the fewest number of buses possible.

4.3.4 Land Use Planning

4.3.5 The Council will shortly been to review its Local Development Plan. This will need to consider a) how appropriate land use can reduce the need to travel or b) how land use can influence travel choices. Planning Policy Wales Edition 10 has placed a new emphasis on sustainable forms of development.

4.3.6 At the present time, some 100,000 commuters travel into Cardiff for employment every day, many of those from RCT. Whilst Metro has a role to play in the necessary growth of the city, the extreme tidal nature of travel demand is unsustainable in itself and polycentric growth across the region must be used as a tool to balance travel flows and reduce journey distances. The establishment of Transport for Wales offices in Pontypridd is an excellent example of how such growth should be targeted at other major centres across the region where there are excellent public transport options. Such investments can also complement and help to sustain our town centres.

4.3.7 Technology

4.3.8 Digital technology offers the opportunity to help to limit the need to travel. Agile and home working can reduce the number of work related trips that we make and skype, video conferencing, etc, can reduce the need to travel to attend meetings, etc, this is pertinent to RCT as we operate over a number of sites across the county borough.

4.3.9 Technology is also underpinning the development of new transport models; Mobility-as-a-Service (MaaS) is beginning to deliver integrated journey planning via apps and reducing reliance on car ownership.

4.3.10 Car Parking Charging Strategies

4.3.10 These local strategies can influence mode choice and reduce the attractiveness of car over other modes. Car park charges are emotive and involve wider considerations such as the ongoing viability of our town centres.

4.3.11 Congestion Charging or Workplace Car Park Charging

4.3.12 As introduced by London and Nottingham respectively, they discourage car use and can provide a revenue stream for investment in sustainable transport (e.g. work place charging provided a revenue stream to enable capital borrowing to initiate Nottingham Tram). These measures are more appropriate for consideration by major cities but could influence mode choice in RCT if introduced elsewhere.

4.3.13 Taxation

4.3.14 Essentially a high level policy tool for central and national government. The fuel tax escalator was introduced by central government to stem traffic growth. It proved to be both effective and deeply unpopular. Whilst in operation, traffic growth levelled off and started to decline but widespread unrest lead to it being suspended with the consequence that traffic growth resumed at similar levels to those experienced before the impact of the escalator.

4.3.15 Vehicle taxation has also been used to influence choice of vehicle purchase with more polluting vehicles attracting higher levels of taxation depending on fuel type and CO2 emissions.

5 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Equality and Diversity issues will be considered as part of determining the final detail of proposed schemes or emerging strategies.

6 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 There are no consultation requirements relating directly to the report.

7 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The report provides information which highlights measures and initiatives that can support the de-carbonisation of transport. Creating the conditions to achieve modal switch from cars to sustainable transport alternatives will require major capital investment in infrastructure and ongoing enhanced revenue investment in services, along with strategies to win hearts and minds. Some of the cost may be offset by income from demand management measures but these will generally be more regional in nature.
- 7.2 Actions or policy changes will require further reports which will involve detailed consideration of the financial aspects of any recommendations.

8 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 8.1 The report provides information regarding de-carbonising transport. Actions or policy changes will require further reports which will involve detailed consideration of legal aspects of any recommendations.

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

- 9.1 Action to reduce the impact of carbon emissions from the transport sector are linked to and support several local and national policy documents and plans. In addition to the details outlined in Section 3 of this report, the actions set out will enable the Council to maximise its contribution to all seven of the well-being goals contained in the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015.
- 9.2 The actions will also assist the Council in delivering the three main priorities, and associated commitments, contained within its Corporate Plan covering the period 2020 – 2024.
- 9.3 The other major Plan covering RCT which is relevant in this context is the Well-being Plan of the Cwm Taf Public Services Board. One of the objectives in this document is to “help people live long and healthy lives and overcome any challenges”. Improving air quality and encouraging more active travel journeys will help to tackle the problems of obesity that exist and premature respiratory related deaths that occur within the Cwm Taf area.

10 **CONCLUSION**

10.1 Travel demand is complex and influenced by a range of factors. It is a derived demand which will tend to increase with economic growth and prosperity.

10.2 RCT has many levers at its disposal related to transport infrastructure and services, its own fleet and travel demands, and these must be maximised in favour of;

- Eliminating or reducing the need to travel
- Encouraging and promoting sustainable transport infrastructure and services
- Working with the Capital Region to engage, influence and develop regional and national initiatives to minimise carbon emissions and change transport mode

10.3 The following potential specific actions are offered for consideration. Consideration should be given to;

1. Collaboration at regional and national level to develop high level coordinated strategies to decarbonise transport.
2. Seek to maximise the benefits of Metro to RCT by promoting complementary programmes of investment that enable sustainable growth.
3. Accelerate Active Travel infrastructure provision and promote the benefits of active travel.
4. Assess the merits of promoting Transit Oriented Development via the Local Development Plan and proposed Strategic Development Plan
5. Continued collaboration with the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal, the Cardiff Capital Region Transport Authority and Welsh Government to introduce:
 - i. EV Charging Infrastructure
 - ii. EV Taxis
 - iii. EV Public Bus Services
6. Continue to trial low carbon vehicles for its own fleet and introduce a programme for phased implementation of LCV's as appropriate and fit for purpose vehicles enter the market.
7. Establish a base-line of staff travel to work modes and develop strategies to enable and promote sustainable travel to work.
8. Work to encourage polycentric growth across the region to reduce the length of travel to work
9. Engage in any future considerations related to congestion or workplace charging proposals, should they be promoted anywhere in the region or at a location that has implications for RCT.
10. Maximise the benefits of technology to reduce the need to travel or to travel more sustainably.

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CLIMATE CHANGE STEERING GROUP

28TH JANUARY 2020

CONSULTATION ON THE DRAFT WILDFLOWER GRASS MANAGEMENT POLICY FOR RHONDDA CYNON TAF

**REPORT OF THE GROUP DIRECTOR, PROSPERITY, DEVELOPMENT &
FRONTLINE SERVICES AND THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH,
PROTECTION & COMMUNITY SERVICES DISCUSSION WITH THE
CABINET'S CLIMATE CHANGE CHAMPION (COUNCILLOR RHYS LEWIS)**

Author: Elizabeth Dean, Environment Planner – 01443 562242

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to consult the Steering Group on the draft Wildflower Grass Management Policy for Rhondda Cynon Taf.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Steering Group:

- 2.1 Comment on the draft Wildflower Grass Management Policy, and
- 2.2 That the feedback and comments of the Climate Control Cabinet Steering Group are reported to Cabinet to inform their decision with regard to the policy.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Land management has significant climate change and biodiversity impacts. The grassland management policy seeks to address these, whilst continuing to meet the Council's Corporate priorities.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Two earlier reports (2015 and 2017) have been considered by Scrutiny committee regarding wildflower grass management and pollinators. For a number of years, grassland management pilots have been underway on a limited number of sites in parks, on road verges and key countryside sites. These pilots have enabled the Council to explore the issues, to test sustainability, to monitor the biodiversity impact and inform the development of this draft Wildflower Grass Management Policy.

- 4.2 In recent years, the loss of wildflower grassland habitats and the pollinating insects they support has become an issue of public concern. Publically owned grasslands and grass verges have significant potential as reservoirs of wildflower rich habitat that can contribute to reconnecting and restoring grassland biodiversity. As these areas are in public view, they also offer opportunities for awareness raising, local community support and action. A number of the pilot projects were suggested by residents or Councillors and some local communities helped to develop 'Grab a Rake' (see Appendix 2).
- 4.3 The management of Council owned land for biodiversity has been an important priority within 'Action for Nature: the Local Biodiversity Action Plan for Rhondda Cynon Taf'. In recent years, grassland management has also been recognised in the actions undertaken to meet the Council's Biodiversity Duty under S6. Environment (Wales) Act 2016. Cross departmental working is fundamental to this, in particular as grass cutting has been transferred from Parks and Countryside to Streetcare.
- 4.4 It is important to appreciate that a wildflower management approach is not about abandonment. Active management is required for native wildflowers and their pollinators to thrive. Grass is left uncut until the flowers have set seed but later in the year it is cut and the grass is collected into 'habitat piles'. The collection of the cuttings is an essential part of the process. It removes nutrients, lowers the soil fertility and prevents a 'thatch' of dead grass inhibiting wildflower seed growth. Over time, the percentage of grass decreases and the percentage of wildflowers will increase. On larger sites, conservation grazing may be the most sustainable option.
- 4.5 In Rhondda Cynon Taf, we are very fortunate to have a wide range of native wildflowers growing naturally in our fields, verges and woodlands. All these plants are perfectly adapted to the soil, climate and habitat and are part of the 'ecosystem' providing food not only for pollinators but for many insects and other animals. This is the foundation of our unique biodiversity. Sadly, this has been lost in some other parts of the UK.
- 4.6 The proposed Rhondda Cynon Taf grassland and grass-verge biodiversity management policy is **'to increase the area and extent of wildflower rich grassland habitat in the County Borough in support of the Council's Biodiversity Duty and 'Action for Nature: the Local Biodiversity Action Plan'**.

The key principles in support of the policy are:

- To identify sites where there are no over-riding health and safety constraints to changed grassland management.
 - To ensure changes in grass and grass-verge management are broadly supported by local people.
 - To pick sites with the highest potential for biodiversity improvement. The measure of potential includes consideration of:
 - a) Existing wildflower composition;
 - b) Larger sites being better than small ones;
 - c) Sites which help to create habitat connectivity within the local landscape;
 - d) Sites which help 'fill in' gaps in the network of sites across the County Borough.
-
- To pick sites where appropriate vehicle access is available.
 - To ensure sites have necessary 'eco-pile' composting capacity.
 - Where appropriate, to establish conservation grazing sites on large sites.
 - Integrate management with Japanese Knotweed, Himalayan Balsam and other invasive plant control.
 - Develop site interpretation at a scale and form appropriate to the site and location, and co-ordinate via the Council web site using the 'brimstone butterfly' emblem as the project logo.
 - Where appropriate, link local communities and interest groups with site management for awareness raising, training, the recording of wildflowers and insects and to promote 'Grab a Rake' community raking.
 - On 'cut and collect' sites, visibility splays and access paths will continue to be cut more regularly.
 - In some cases not all the wildflower grass needs to be cut and collected each year. Staggered biennial cutting can ensure even better pollinating insect habitat and that some wildflower seeds are available to seed eating birds as winter food.
 - Even grassland that initially has few wildflowers can quickly diversify with biodiversity management, however in these cases the floristic improvements can be accelerated by planting spring bulbs. These will provide an instant reaction to new management and the 'hay meadow' management will ensure the plants can photosynthesize after flowering and develop strong bulbs for flowering the next spring.

- Map, record and report progress through the Biodiversity Duty and the Local Biodiversity Action Plan.

4.7 The draft Policy on Wildflower Grass Management is set out in Appendix 1. In 2020, it is proposed that the number of sites in wildflower management will be increased and that website and social media will be utilised to engage with local communities. Local Members, residents and officers have identified a number of suitable sites and it is anticipated that this will continue in subsequent years. If the policy is adopted by the Council, it will provide clear guidelines for the future development of the programme.

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 draft policy has been developed in consultation with Council staff who have responsibility and practical expertise in grassland management as well the Council's ecologist. Local residents and Councillors have contributed to the pilot projects, some being actively involved in 'Grab a Rake' to remove cuttings from small sites which are unsuitable for 'cut and collect' machinery.

6.2 The future development of the wildflower grass cutting programme will continue to involve local Councillors and residents. Website and social media are proposed to provide a channel for information, awareness raising and involvement.

6.3 The views of this Steering Group will make an important contribution and inform the deliberations of Cabinet.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

7.1 There are likely to be some minor financial implications associated with this report. The Council's grassland management budget is significant and the changes proposed can largely be accommodated within this. There may be additional costs associated with removing cut material, however this should be balanced but the reduced frequency of cuts on these sites. The pilots have demonstrated that, over time, the volume of cut material decreases as the wildflower percentage increases.

7.2 Site signage is likely to be expanded, using the brimstone butterfly emblem, to mark sites in conservation management. The machinery required for 'cut and collect' is different to routine grass cutting and its use requires training for the operatives. The current tracked machine

has a large capacity and is suitable for cutting wet ground outside the routine grass cutting season. The machine and the initial staff training was largely funded by grant aid from Natural Resources Wales. As the programme develops, there will be a need for additional machinery (in particular for smaller sites) for repairs and eventual replacement and for additional staff training.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 8.1 The Council has a statutory biodiversity duty under S.6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 and general responsibilities with regard to land management under various Acts including Highways legislation.

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

- 9.1 The draft policy on Wildflower Grass Management contributes to the Council's PLACE priority for creating neighbourhoods where people are proud to live and work. It also contributes to 'providing essential services well', 'help people and communities to help themselves' and to 'build a sustainable County Borough' as set out in the Council's Corporate Plan 2016-2020. The Council is currently undertaking initial discussions with regard to the next Corporate Plan for the period 2020-2024 which is likely to contain further consideration of the climate emergency and biodiversity loss.
- 9.2 The draft policy reflects the five ways of working of the Well-being of Future Generations Act. It has been developed collaboratively, drawing on the skills of practitioners, other local authorities and NRW with the involvement of local residents and Councillors. It is designed to deliver sustainable, long-term benefits and prevent the loss of native wildflowers and the biodiversity that depends on this habitat. The Policy seeks to integrate this approach within the existing grass cutting service, expand the number of sites gradually, learn from experience and share this via social media.
- 9.3 The draft policy relates most closely to the Resilience and Global Responsibility goals of the Act but the extension of the programme more widely across RCT will contribute to the Equality and Cohesive Communities goals. The impact on the Prosperity, Health and Cultural /Welsh Language goals is likely to be positive.

10. CONCLUSION

- 10.1 Members of the Climate Control Cabinet Steering Group are requested to consider the information presented in this report and are invited to comment on the Draft Policy on Wildflower Grass Management

<https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/Council/CouncillorsCommitteesandMeetings/Meetings/EnvironmentalServicesScrutinyCommittee/2015/04/20/Reports/item4actiontosafeguardpollinatinginsectsinrct.pdf>

<https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/Council/CouncillorsCommitteesandMeetings/Meetings/PublicServiceDeliveryCommunitiesandProsperityScrutinyCommittee/2017/12/12/Reports/AgendaItem3TheEnvironmentActWales2015BiodiversityDutyandPollinators.pdf>

Appendix One

A Policy on Wildflower Grass Management

This note sets out the policy position for biodiversity grass verge and open space management in Rhondda Cynon Taf. For a variety of fortunate reasons, highway grass verges, open spaces, parks and school grounds in Rhondda Cynon Taf are often rich in native wildflowers and support 'priority' grassland habitat. In recent years, the loss of wildflower grassland habitats and the pollinating insects they support has become an issue of significant public concern. Strategies to restore grassland biodiversity have been developed and publically owned grasslands and grass verges are increasingly seen as important reservoirs of wildflower rich habitat. A resource which if managed sympathetically, can help to reconnect and restore grassland biodiversity. Being in the public view, these areas also offer excellent opportunities for awareness raising and local community support and action. Wildflower grassland and grass verge management also involves integrated cross department working in support of Action for Nature: the Local Biodiversity Action Plan for RCT and the Council's new Biodiversity Duty.

It is important to recognise that wildflower management is not abandonment of land. Wildflowers need management to thrive and wildflower grasslands are traditionally maintained either by cutting or grazing. In very simple terms, biodiversity management requires grass to be left uncut in the spring and summer in order for flowers to 'flower and seed' , and only then are cut, with all 'arising' collected. The collection of the cut grass is essential, because in doing so it removes nutrients from the soil which has the dual impact of reducing grass growth and increasing wildflower diversity and abundance. Collection also ensures that dead grass isn't allowed to form a mulch which can smother the wildflowers beneath. On grasslands where cut material is not collected, wildflowers will not flourish. Indeed changes of management which see grasslands cut once or twice a year but with the cuttings left is proving worse for wildflower diversity than traditional regular grass cutting. Again, it is important to re-iterate that wildflower grassland management is not abandonment.

Once collected the cut material can often be composted on site in special 'eco-piles', which act as hibernation areas and refuges for reptiles. Where there is no space, the cut material can be removed for composting elsewhere. The removal of cut material is essential. It is also the most difficult element of wildflower management and it is one of the first questions that need to be considered when changing management to a wildflower regime. In most cases cut and collection will be by machine, however on some small sites community raking up of cut grass through the 'grab a rake' initiative with the green bagging of cut grass for waste collection is a viable option. On larger sites, where opportunities arise, conservation grazing is a very effective wildflower management tool. RCT Council runs a number of conservation grazing sites.

On steep banks collection of cut grass by machine is impossible. Here gravity assists, as cut grass 'works down' to the bottom of banks, leaving at least the upper parts wildflower rich. In such circumstances, where community volunteer help is available, hand raking can help the bottom of the bank.

The RCT grass and grass-verge biodiversity management policy is **'to increase the area and extent of wildflower rich grassland habitat in the County Borough in support of the Council's Biodiversity Duty and 'Action for Nature: the Local Biodiversity Action Plan'**.

Key principles in support of the policy include:

1. To identify sites where there are no over-riding health and safety constraints to changed grassland management.
2. To ensure changes in grass and grass-verge management are broadly supported by local people.
3. To pick sites with the highest potential for biodiversity improvement. The measure of potential includes consideration of:
 - a) Existing wildflower composition;
 - b) Larger sites being better than small ones;
 - c) Sites which help to create habitat connectivity within the local landscape;
 - d) Sites which help 'fill in' gaps in the network of sites across the County Borough.
4. To pick sites where appropriate vehicle access is available.
5. To ensure sites have necessary 'eco-pile' composting capacity.
6. Where appropriate to establish conservation grazing sites on large sites.
7. Integrate management with Japanese Knotweed, Himalayan Balsam and other invasive plant control.
8. Develop site interpretation at a scale and form appropriate to the site and location, and co-ordinate via the Council web site using the 'brimstone butterfly' emblem as the project logo.
9. Where appropriate link local communities and interest groups with site management for awareness raising, training, the recording of wildflowers and insects and to promote 'Grab a Rake' community raking.
10. On 'cut and collect' sites, visibility splays and access paths will continue to be cut more regularly.
11. In some cases not all the wildflower grass needs to be cut and collected each year. Staggered biennial cutting can ensure even better pollinating insect habitat and that some wildflower seeds are available to seed eating birds as winter food.

12. Even grassland which initially have few wildflowers can quickly diversify with biodiversity management, however in these cases the floristic improvements can be accelerated by planting spring bulb. These will provide an instant reaction to new management and the 'hay meadow' management will ensure the plants can photosynthesize after flowering and develop strong bulbs for flowering the next spring.
13. Map, record and report progress through the Biodiversity Duty and Local Biodiversity Action Plan.

Appendix Two

A brief guide to managing grass for Biodiversity

What changes are taking place in terms of grass management?

At present, most of our grass verges and parks are cut regularly (every four weeks or so). However, this does not give a chance for wild flowers to flower and go to seed as the grass is cut quite short. Less wild flowers mean that there is less food for insects and in turn, less insects mean less food for other animals. In addition, when we cut the grass, some of the clippings are left on the surface; they then get washed into the grass by rain, people walking through etc. These clippings then sit at the surface of the ground, suppress some of the light which stop wild flowers from coming up and as the clippings break down, they feed the grass. This improves the growing conditions for the grass so the grass gets stronger and the wild flowers cannot compete with it. It is important to note that for wild flowers to grow successfully, they need to grow on poor soils. By cutting the grass the way we do, we are encouraging more grass and less flowers; therefore, less biodiversity.

To change this trend, we have identified areas in some parks, grass verges and cemeteries where we could let the grass grow for a longer period of time. This will help wild flowers to complete their life cycle (namely: come up, flower and go to seed) before being cut and collected. By doing this, over time, we will see less grass and more wild flowers coming through. More wild flowers means more pollen and nectar for insects which means that they are more likely to breed and increase their numbers.

What is 'Grab your Rake'?

'Grab your Rake' is a campaign devised to involve the local community in the management of some of our grass verges left for biodiversity.

It is aimed at anyone who would like to spend a couple of hours outdoors to help us rake an area after it has been strimmed; pile up the clippings and bag them ready to be recycled/ composted. On some sites, we may be able to create habitat piles for other animals such as reptiles which are also species under threat.

What tools/ equipment is required?

The only things needed are: a rake and a pair of gloves.

Taking Health and Safety into consideration

The areas selected under the 'Grab your Rake' campaign may be located near busy roads. It is therefore important to brief people beforehand and to ensure the following:

- **Remind individuals to be mindful of the nearby road and their positioning when working**
- **Signs should be on site to forewarn drivers**
- **Cones may be used to create a safety buffer away between the road and the work area should this be needed**
- **When using a rake, rake towards you – not away from you. This will reduce the amount of physical stress on the body**
- **Safe distances should be maintained when working so as to prevent hitting each other with tools**
- **Gloves should be worn at all times especially when bagging the clippings**
- **Bags should not be overfilled so as to cause injury when lifting. Remind individuals to lift with their knees not with their back – good manual handling technique**
- **Remember to wash hands before eating**

Other community activities

As the 'Grab your Rake' campaign will take place primarily over late summer and early autumn, we would like to invite the community to help us plant some of those biodiversity areas with bulbs or even some devil's bit scabious which is one of the main food source for insects in RCT.

This is a good project to involve young children and teach them about planting bulbs in grass as if they had always been there. This will also provide some colour and interest until the rest of the wild flowers start to come up.

Method of planting daffodils:

The best way to plant daffodils is to lift a patch of turf and scatter the bulbs. Where the bulbs fall is where they to be planted. All of this will give a more natural look once the daffodils are in flower. Make sure however that you leave plenty of space between each bulb so it has space to spread. Before replacing the turf, you need to score the underside of the turf to loosen the soil, replace it and only if possible water the area. As a rule, planting depth should be 3 times the height of the bulb.

Tools required: spade; fork; hand trowel and gloves.

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RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CLIMATE CHANGE STEERING GROUP

28TH JANUARY 2020

WHAT ACTION CAN BE TAKEN IN THE AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT AREAS, TO ENSURE AIR QUALITY IMPROVES ACROSS THE COUNTY BOROUGH

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

**Author(s): Neil Pilliner, Environmental Protection & Housing Standards
Manager, Gareth Purnell, Pollution Control Officer**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to consider what action can be taken in the Air Quality Management Areas, to ensure air quality improves across the County Borough.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended to note the contents of this report as part of the ongoing work of the Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group and recommend a way forward for Cabinet.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The contents of this report provides key air quality information as required by the Discussion Paper 'Work Programme for the Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group'

4. BACKGROUND TO LOCAL AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT

- 4.1 It has been understood for some time that the quality of air that people experience can have a substantial effect on their health and wellbeing. Since the first half of the 20th century, awareness amongst the general public of the importance of air quality has increased significantly. Originally emphasised within the UK by the visually dramatic sulphurous smog events of the 50s, then subsequently by the phasing out of anti-knocking lead in petrol during the 90s and up to the present day by photochemical smog associated with international cities such as Los Angeles, New Delhi and Beijing.

- 4.2 Although indoor air quality can be highly relevant to a person's health, by necessity Local Air Quality Management is focused upon the public's exposure to outdoor air pollutants¹.
- 4.3 The understanding of air quality has substantively evolved over time as the causes of air pollution have changed. Within Rhondda Cynon Taf, as is the case throughout Wales, Nitrogen Dioxide² [NO₂] and Particulate Matter³ [PM₁₀] are of the most concern, due to their ubiquitous prevalence and potential significant impact upon public health. Short-term exposure to elevated levels of Particulate Matter [PM₁₀] has been shown to cause eye, nose and throat irritation, asthma symptom exacerbation, headaches and nausea. Longer-term exposure has been linked to an increase in morbidity⁴ and higher mortality risks associated with heart disease, stroke, respiratory diseases, lung cancer, etc. The Committee on the Medical Effects of Air Pollutants (COMEAP) has established that short-term exposure to NO₂, particularly at high concentrations, is a respiratory irritant that can cause inflammation of the airways leading to, for example, cough, production of mucus and shortness of breath. Studies have shown associations of NO₂ in outdoor air with reduced lung development, and respiratory infections in early childhood and effects on lung function in adulthood.
- 4.4 Poor air quality is the largest environmental risk to public health in the [UK](#) and is a public health priority for [Wales](#). It has been estimated that the annual mortality burden of human-made air pollution in the UK is 28,000 to 36,000 deaths every year, in comparison 20,000 deaths have been attributed to alcohol related diseases and obesity is currently believed to be responsible for more than 30,000 deaths every year. It is understood that often the most vulnerable within our communities are most at risk from the potential effects of air pollutants and perversely are more often likely to experience it. The unborn child, children, the old, those suffering from certain common medical conditions and those on low incomes can be particularly [vulnerable](#) to poor air quality. Although the discussion on air quality focuses upon public health, poor air quality can also cause, agricultural and ecological damage, property devaluation and entrench economic disparity.
- 4.5 Acknowledging the strategic role local government can have in managing air quality, relevant legislation and associated regulations have been enacted. Notably the Clean Air Act 1993⁵, Environmental Protection Act 1990⁶,

¹ Seven 'pollutants of concern' relevant to Local Air Quality Management are Carbon Monoxide (CO), Benzene (C₆H₆), Butadiene (C₄H₆), Lead (Pb), Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂), Particulate Matter (PM₁₀) & Sulphur Dioxide (SO₂)

² A gas made from Nitrogen and Oxygen, often formed by complex chemical interactions and heavily associated with emissions from high temperature combustion processes, in very high concentrations it can appear brownish and have an acrid odour but in concentrations normally encountered in the environment it is imperceptible.

³ Particulate Matter is a generic term to describe a complex mixture of solid and semi-liquid particles of varying size, shape and composition. A range of man-made and natural activities as well as the interaction of other air pollutants can produce Particulate Matter. PM₁₀ refers to Particle Matter of a size normally less than 10µm, which are invisible to the human eye, but can be inhaled into the airways and lungs of people.

⁴ The incidence of disease within the population

⁵ The regulation of emissions from certain small industrial and domestic sources of air pollution, however, it is widely acknowledged that the legislation may have become outdated and lacks relevance.

⁶ Mechanism to prevent or control certain types of statutory nuisance that can cause air pollution.

Environment Act 1995⁷, Pollution Prevention and Control Act 2000⁸ and the Well-being of Future Generations Wales Act 2015⁹. This has resulted in Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC having a number of statutory duties to not only prevent or control air pollution but also to actively assess and intervene to improve local air quality where it can.

5. ASSESSING LOCAL AIR QUALITY IN RHONDDA CYNON TAF

- 5.1 Local Air Quality Management can cut across many areas of Local Government. Although primarily it has relevance to Public Health, it can also have a role within Environmental Regulation & Enforcement, Development Control, Housing, Highways, Fleet Management, Corporate Estates, Ecology and Education.
- 5.2 Statutory [guidance](#) provides detailed instruction on how local authorities should go about assessing air quality to confirm if any [Air Quality Objectives](#) are being exceeded¹⁰. These Air Quality Objectives relate to outdoor locations where air pollutants are most likely to be elevated and where the public¹¹, irrespective of who they are, is likely to be present for long enough to be potentially effected by them. If an Air Quality Objective is not achieved, guidance sets out how Local Authorities should go about considering the implementation of actions to work towards achieving future compliance.
- 5.3 Having regard to guidance, published national assessment, local understanding, desktop analysis and current technical capabilities, the Local Authority has developed a network of air quality monitoring locations throughout its area. Since the millennium, it has examined over 134 locations with current¹² monitoring arrangements assessing 55 targeted roadside locations for Nitrogen Dioxide [NO₂] and one specific area of interest for Particulate Matter [PM₁₀] associated with a local quarry.
- 5.4 The current monitoring network makes use of several different approved automatic¹³ and non-automatic¹⁴ monitoring techniques. With the gathered data routinely published [online](#) collaboratively with Welsh Government. It is not always possible, either as a result of logistics or resources, to monitor all relevant locations and in certain circumstances the Local Authority has, where appropriate, had regard to computer ‘modelling’ to indicate the likely levels of air pollutants at particular locations.
- 5.5 Every year, the Local Authority [publishes](#) online an annual Air Quality Progress Report. This provides the preceding years ratified monitoring data, an overview

⁷ Legal framework for Local Air Quality Management, including the duty to assess and intervene.

⁸ Permitting of certain industrial activities and their emissions.

⁹ Enshrines the seven “Well-being Goals” and the importance of sustainable development.

¹⁰ Absolute concentration values(s) set for each relevant pollutant over specific exposure periods

¹¹ This does not include workers but does include the public attending a workplace (e.g. a library)

¹² As of January 2020

¹³ Analyses the air pollutant at location and provides a real-time indication of its concentration.

¹⁴ Requires subsequent analysis in a laboratory to determine the air pollutants concentrations.

of actions that could affect local air quality and an assessment of current Local Air Quality Management.

- 5.6 As a result of the integration of the Future Generations ethos, a dual approach to Local Air Quality Management is developing. This burden reduction approach recognises that for many air pollutants, the less people are exposed to them, the better it will be in terms of public health. The Future Generations agenda has also led to the consideration of air quality holistically, rather than in isolation, as part of the multi-agenda approach with particular emphasis on local transport, noise, climate change, active travel and green-infrastructure.
- 5.7 Adverse environmental noise can also markedly affect public health. In recognition of the close relationship between areas of elevated levels of air pollution and human-made environmental noise, Local Air Quality Management also evaluates its role in achieving Noise Action Plan Priority Area [NAPPA] improvements. There are a number of [NAPPAs](#) within Rhondda Cynon Taf, many of these areas have also been declared Air Quality Management Areas.
- 5.8 In recognising the importance of health inequality and local air quality, the Local Authority has assisted its partners, Public Health Wales, Cwm Taf Morgannwg UHB, Natural Resources Wales and Merthyr Tydfil CBC, with the development of the Health and Air Pollution Risk Assessment/Area Prioritisation ([HAP-RAP](#)) analytical tool. This has been used to identify those communities¹⁵ within Rhondda Cynon Taf that may be most vulnerable to the effects of poor air quality and where measures focused to improve air quality may provide the greatest overall benefit.

6. LOCAL AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT AREAS AND THE TREND IN AIR QUALITY

- 6.1 The levels of air pollution [experienced](#) locally can be as a result of a number of different types of sources, both within the Borough and further afield¹⁶. Generally local Nitrogen Dioxide [NO₂] levels are primarily influenced by road traffic sources. Nationally air quality has generally improved over time as the adoption of new technology, macroeconomic change and regulation has reduced the amount of total air pollution emitted. Nitrogen Dioxide [NO₂] levels, have not improved as quickly as had been expected. In RCT a worsening trend in Nitrogen Dioxide [NO₂] was observed for several years after the Millennium. Most likely due to substantial local and regional urbanisation, associated traffic growth and the increase in use of diesel cars. Since then the trend has stabilised and more recently shown some general signs of gradual improvement.
- 6.2 It is expected that as cleaner technology and sustainable mass transport options become available levels of air pollution will reduce, however, significant uncertainty is attached to how society, and its transport options, will change.

¹⁵ Priority clusters were associated with Ferndale/Tylorstown/Llwynypia, Cymmer and Penrhiwceiber/Miskin

¹⁶ Both pollutants can be heavily influenced by transboundary pollution events (emissions of air pollution that has crossed great distances before arriving locally).

- 6.3 Although the vast majority of Rhondda Cynon Taf is believed to experience good air quality, very specific local circumstances can result in levels of Nitrogen Dioxide that can exceed an Air Quality Objective. This has resulted in sixteen, comparatively small areas within the County Borough declared as Air Quality Management Areas [AQMAs]. They cover a range of different urban areas from some town centres to the length of certain streets or even a small number of properties close to particularly busy roads or junctions. Currently the largest AQMA in the County Borough covers 207 properties within the Aberdare Town Centre, whereas, the smallest covers one property near a very busy road junction at Mwyndy. It is also the case that not all AQMAs, or parts of the same AQMA, may experience the same degree of elevated air pollution. At present it is believed the Cymmer, Ferndale and Nightingales Bush AQMAs may experience the highest observed levels of air pollution, whereas, Aberdare, Tonyrefail and Treforest may be much closer to achieving compliance.
- 6.4 It can be difficult to make meaningful comparisons of the number, size and severity of AQMAs between Welsh Local Authorities. For instance, Rhondda Cynon Taf may observe a larger number of AQMAs when compared to Cardiff, which has four AQMAs, or Swansea, which has one AQMA, however, the AQMAs declared in these two cities cover much greater areas and numbers of people. In general terms Rhondda Cynon Taf is ranked 13th best for levels of Nitrogen Dioxide [NO₂] out of the 22 Local Authorities in Wales¹⁷.
- 6.5 The reasons for the AQMAs are varied but are invariably associated with road traffic emissions. Although the reasons can be very location specific, they often include the importance of local topography and the urban environment. The volume, speed and composition of road traffic, as well as the management of this traffic, along roads within, or nearby to, each AQMA are also key factors. Some strategic arterial roads, for instance the A470 and the A4119, have a demonstrable effect at certain vulnerable locations. Table A in Appendix 1 provides further detail on each Air Quality Management Area within Rhondda Cynon Taf, including the number of properties in each area, the improvement required and the key air quality related factors.

7. IMPROVING LOCAL AIR QUALITY

- 7.1 At the local level action can be taken to improve air quality, often in conjunction with other agendas, both at locations where levels of air pollutants are elevated and more generally throughout the community. With regards to the Air Quality Management Areas, the Local Authority has adopted individual Air Quality Action Plans [AQAPs] that advocate cost-effective/cost-beneficial actions that would work towards the aspiration of compliance with the Air Quality Objectives. These actions are varied, and include specific actions relating to an Air Quality Management Area, to more far reaching actions that could improve air quality more widely. Several of these actions have already been implemented, however, it has not been possible to advance all actions to date.

¹⁷ Population weighted exposure to Nitrogen Dioxide.

- 7.2 Appendix 1 Table B contains a list of various practical improvement actions that could deliver air quality improvement within the Air Quality Management Areas and potentially more broadly throughout the County Borough. Having regard to local circumstances and the often transport related issues associated with improving air quality, some potential viable actions have been identified from the list in Table B for further detailed consideration with the relevant partners. These have been listed with additional information within Appendix 1 Table C.

8. FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES FOR LOCAL AIR QUALITY

- 8.1 To enable effective assessment of local air quality, over time the Local Authority has put in place a targeted monitoring network. This has enabled an evidenced based approach to policy formation, decision making and improvement actions. Supporting not only Local Air Quality Management duties directly but also other priority agendas as well as sustainable local development. Due to continued resource pressures, this network has inevitably been optimised to meet statutory requirements and the monitoring network may not currently satisfy the wider public interest in air quality or developing policy areas. In addition, as monitoring equipment approaches 'end of life', decisions will be required on further investment or rationalisation of the monitoring infrastructure.
- 8.2 Sustainable economic development and the potential future adoption of 'cleaner' technologies will likely advance improvement in local air quality over time. However, without intervention, the most vulnerable communities may be the last to experience the anticipated improvement¹⁸. With the lack of dedicated external grant funding and the prioritisation of other activities, resourcing improvement actions is likely to be a substantive barrier to progressing Local Air Quality Management. Additionally, although it is acknowledged that many departments of the Local Authority could positively impact local air quality it has been challenging to provide a coordinated holistic approach in the consideration and implementation of improvement actions. This has led to the identification and delivery of 'win-win' multi-agenda outcomes becoming an increasingly important factor in obtaining potential funding and raising awareness of understanding the need to improve air quality across a variety of policy areas and decision makers.
- 8.3 Cross-agenda delivery has had a recognised role in local air quality management for some time. For instance, due to significant investment cost it would be unlikely that the Church Village Bypass would have been a viable action to improve air quality in isolation, however, its viability to improve local amenity and drive economic development enabled this project to go forward. In doing so, this has had a dramatic role in improving local air quality and environmental noise within a number of communities along the B4595. The inclusion of active travel links via the Community route also reflected the

¹⁸ Cleaner technology can include a range of innovative solutions, including renewable energy, the uptake of low emission vehicles, alternative powered domestic heating, the use of information technology to reduce travel need, improve travel options (i.e. single-trip hire schemes) or facilitate more efficient coordinated travel. The use of some forms of cleaner technology may incur an initial cost or technological awareness, which the poorest or most vulnerable in society may find challenging.

consideration of sustainable travel options when planning the by-pass road and the impact on the local community.

- 8.4 By using, where appropriate, a 'win-win' multi-agenda outcome approach it is not only possible to deliver the obvious actions that could directly improve air quality but also bring together a range of experiences and expertise to enable the identification of potentially cost-effective solutions that deliver a wider range of sustainable benefits. For example, the utilisation of grant funding¹⁹ to deliver improved/repaired street lighting serving the active travel access route to Pontypridd High School. This action benefited a number of agendas, including local engagement (action identified after engagement with the High School), active travel (further improving safety and reducing perceived barriers to the use of the designated active travel route), air quality & climate change (by enabling active travel this may directly reduce dependency on vehicle and associated air pollution and carbon emissions) and biodiversity (it was possible to tailor the action so as its impact on nocturnal wildlife could be reduced).
- 8.5 It is likely that Climate Change, with an increasingly erratic climate, may negatively impact upon future air quality, potentially by making elevated air pollution episodes more frequent and more intense. As such, a need to consider novel yet deliverable solutions is paramount with sustainable transport, green infrastructure and behavioural change seen as representing significant potential in delivering broad improvement. These broader actions need to be considered alongside appropriate local traffic management solutions to benefit air quality by improving and influencing traffic flow in key areas.
- 8.6 Current public interest in Local Air Quality Management can mean that the air quality agenda could become a strong agent for positive change. As air quality understanding and expectations has evolved, Welsh Government policy in this area has also rapidly developed. Currently the Welsh Government is [consulting](#) upon a number of changes to how Local Air Quality Management may be delivered, these proposed changes may have the potential to alter the Council's statutory obligations and require reconsideration of how it goes about delivering Local Air Quality Management duties in the future.

9. CARBON REDUCTION

- 9.1 The interaction between Air Pollution and Climate Change is complex, with inextricable overlap between both agendas. It is likely that many actions to improve air quality will have a complimentary effect in tackling Climate Change, particularly in respect of reducing vehicle use through more sustainable travel options. However, not all actions to improve air pollution will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and vice versa. For instance, the building of a new road to divert road traffic from an area where air pollution may be elevated, could result in traffic growth along the new road and an overall increase in greenhouse gas emissions. As with the Church Village bypass and the proposed Llanharan Bypass, incorporating active travel measures are key design factors in providing sustainable travel options for communities. Wherever possible, those

¹⁹ Local Authority Single Revenue Grant 2017-18

actions that improve both agendas should be prioritised and efforts made to jointly assess both air quality and climate change impacts during the evaluation of improvement actions.

10. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

10.1 This report is informative, as such an Equality Impact Assessment is not required. As air quality improvement actions (or inaction) has the potential to affect certain groups, during the compilation or review of an Air Quality Action Plan(s), a proportionate Equality Impact Assessment will be included.

11. CONSULTATION

11.1 This report has been produced to provide air quality information as required by the Work Programme for the Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group and, as such, no formal consultation is necessary.

11.2 Local Air Quality Management is, at various stages, subject to statutory consultations, including formal annual review by Welsh Government, and the maintenance of certain information within a public register. The Local Authority is currently planning, in accordance with statutory guidance to review, and where necessary to modify, all sixteen Air Quality Action Plans in 2020 to ensure their appropriateness.

12. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

12.1 This report is informative only and does not commit any resources to any particular course of action.

12.2 Currently only a limited air quality monitoring budget is maintained and there is no dedicated budget for improvement action delivery.

13. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

13.1 This report on air quality is informative only and is not a decision making report with regards to any Local Air Quality Management obligations.

13.2 Annual Air Quality Progress Reports are statutory reports which the Local Authority is obliged to produce. Air Quality Action Plans are statutory plans and may place the Local Authority under certain obligations, including the need to work towards delivering the identified actions so as to achieve compliance to an Air Quality Objective. During the formation or review of the Air Quality Action Plan a provisional assessment of the need for a Strategic Environmental Assessment [SEA] will be undertaken.

13.3 Welsh Government retains a number of reserve powers, including legal direction, to ensure Local Authorities undertake their Local Air Quality Management duties. It has previously clarified the likely scenarios as to when and how it may use some of these powers. In recent times, Welsh Government has exercised legal direction powers under Section 85 of the Environment Act

1995 requiring, separately, Cardiff CC and Caerphilly CBC to undertake certain assessments and advance certain improvement actions, that may have significant local impact, in relation to Local Air Quality Management.

14. LINKS TO THE CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS WALES ACT

- 14.1 Local air quality management statutory guidance for Wales incorporates the principles and ways of working associated within the Well-being of Future Generations Act. By abiding by this guidance and utilising methods that acknowledge and promote sustainable multi-agenda delivery, the Council is demonstrating commitment to the principles of the Act.
- 14.2 The Future Generation agenda will also have a key role in how the Local Authority considers air quality, reinforced by guidance requiring that as part of its assessment duties the Local Authority must have regard to the benchmarking of progress against [National Indicator No.4](#). “the level of Nitrogen Dioxide in ambient air”. In contrast to the upper limit driven approach of Local Air Quality Management, the National Indicator drives an alternative burden reduction approach aimed at achieving a reduction in the population weighted general level of Nitrogen Dioxide throughout Rhondda Cynon Taf. Progress in achieving improvement will be gauged against milestones, the achievement of which will be reported in a “Future Trends Report” produced by Welsh Government. In working with its health related partners, the Local Authority has drawn upon expertise and analysis to help identify those communities which may benefit the most from an active approach to improve local air quality, whilst also seeking to fulfil the Local Authorities statutory obligation on local air quality management.
- 14.3 Having regard to the Council’s corporate priorities, air quality improvement and potential actions to bring this about, are likely to have significant relevance to helping some of our most vulnerable residents, encouraging healthier lives and helping to support improved prospects for our children and young people. With regard to creating proud places to live in RCT, improving air quality is a potential priority alongside with making the most of green infrastructure and capitalising upon major sustainable transport regeneration.

15. CONCLUSION

- 15.1 This supporting report provides information relevant to what actions are available to improve air quality in RCT and its contents should be considered as part of the main Discussion Paper - Work Programme for Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group.

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Appendix 1

In the below Tables: -

* = slight importance, ** = moderate importance, *** = substantial importance, **** = major importance

↑ = upward trend/increase in emission, ↓ = downward trend/decrease in emission

Table A: Details on each Air Quality Management Area within Rhondda Cynon Taf

Area	AQM As	No. of Properties	HAP-RAP Priority	NAPPA	Improvement Needed	5 year Trend ²⁰	Traffic Volume	Buses	HGVs	Road Incline	Network Congestion	Road Narrowness	Controlled Traffic	Pedestrian Crossing	Parked Vehicles	Loading Vehicles	In-road Bus Stop	Traffic Calming	Street Canyon	Steep Sided Valley	Dwellings Near Road
Rhondda	Cymer	146	✓	✓	***	↑	**	**		**		**	**	*	**	**			**		**
	Ferndale	102	✓	✓	***	↔	**	**				**		*	**	**			**	**	*
	Llwynypia	28	✓	✓	**	↓	**	**				**	**						**	*	*
	Tonyrefail	20			*	↔	*	*		**		**	**		**		*		**	*	*
	Tylorstown	65	✓	✓	***	↓	**	**		*		**		*	**		*		**	**	**
Cynon	Aberdare	270			*	↓	**					**	**	*							
	Mountain Ash	57	✓		***	↔	**	*	*	*			**	*					**	*	**
Taf	Broadway ²¹	259			**	↓	**					**						*			
	Church Village	21			**	↓	**					**	**			*			**		
	Cilfynydd	173		✓	***	↔	**		*		*				*					*	
	Llanharan	7			*	↓	**					**							**		*
	Mwynydy	1		✓	***	↓	**		*		*		**								
	Nantgarw	8			**	↓	**		*	**			**								*

²⁰ As air quality can fluctuate from year to year, a medium term consideration of the trend is necessary, this can also mean that interventions to improve air quality (e.g. A470 speed restrictions) can take some time before monitoring data robustly demonstrates any local effect.

²¹ The Broadway AQMA is to be amended to reduce its size to approximately 156 properties.

Nightingales Bush	11	✓	** **	↑	** ** **		*		** **										
Pontypridd	84	✓	** **	↑	** **	**			*	** **	*								
Treforest	8	✓	*	↓ ↓	** ** **		*		*										*

Table B: List of practical improvement actions

Actions that are considered more viable are highlighted in **bold**, actions that have already been completed are marked with a **C**

Action Type	Action	Air Quality Impact			Other Impact				Cost	Cost Effectiveness		Further Consideration in relation to AQ
		AQMA	Within Area of Concern	Regional	Noise	Climate change	Economic	PSB Priorities		In AQMA	Regionally	
New & Major Reconfiguration of Roads	Church Village – A473 Relief Rd	Church Village	** *	** *	↓ ↓	↑ ↑	** *		** *	*	**	C
	Porth Rhondda Fawr Lower Relief Rd	N/A	** *	** *	↓ ↓	↑ ↑	** *	*	** *	*	*	C
	Llanharan Bypass	Llanharan	** *	*	↓ ↓	↑ ↑	**		** *	*	*	** *
	Mt Ash Cross-Valley Link	Mt Ash	**	**	↓	↑	**		** *	*	*	**
	Pontypridd Partial Pedestrianisation	Pontypridd	**	*	↓ ↓	↓			*	**		C
	Ely Valley Rd Dualling	N/A		**	↓	↑	**		** *	*	*	*
	Llwydcoed – Heads of the Valley Reconfiguration	N/A		*	↓	↑	**		** *		*	*
	Treorchy Relief Rd	N/A	*	**	↓	↑	*		** *		*	*
Traffic Management Improvement	Cardiff Rd Signal Improvement reduce congestion along Cardiff Rd northbound	Aberdare	*	*				*	*	**		C

Oxford St Signal Improvement reduce congestion along Oxford St northbound (no effect to New Rd)	Mt Ash	*	*			*	*	**		C
Broadway North Signal Improvement & Increased Junction Capacity (right-turn from Broadway North) reduce congestion along Broadway northbound	Broadway	*	*			*	*	**		C
Partridge Rd Jct Signal Improvement reduce congestion along Partridge Rd southbound	Llwynypia	*	*			*	*	**		** *
Mill St Signal Improvement reduce congestion along Mill St northbound	Tonyrefail	*	*			*	*	**		**
Dyffryn Terrace Signal Improvement reduce congestion along Dyffryn Tce westbound	Church Village	*	*			*	*	**		**
Off-Road Bus Stops reduce disruption to traffic flow within the area caused by bus waiting	Church Village Tonyrefail Tylorstown	**	*	↑	↓	*	**	**		**

Flow Controls	A470 Partial Speed Limit Reduction & Preserving Existing Green Barriers Reducing speed limit directly reduces traffic emissions with existing green barriers providing a physical break from air pollution (led by Welsh Government).	Broadway Cilfynydd Nightingales B. Pontypridd Treforest	** *	**	↓↓	↓↓ ↓	*		**	**	**	C
	Designated Off-Street Parking Reducing need for on-street parking and potential associated impediment to traffic flow	Cymmer Ferndale Tonyrefail Tylorstown	**	*		↑	*	*	** *	*	*	**
	Increased Parking Enforcement Restricting parking with associated enforcement at critical locations which can otherwise impede traffic flow	Cymmer Ferndale Tonyrefail Tylorstown	**	*	↓	↓	*	*	*	**	**	** *
Linked Transportation	Llanharan Park & Ride	Llanharan	*	**	↓↓	↓↓	**	*	*	*	*	C
	Abercynon Park & Ride	Cilfynydd Nightingales B. Treforest	*	**	↓↓	↓↓	**	*	**	*	**	C
	Taffs Well Park & Ride			**	↓↓	↓↓	**	*	*		*	C
	Rhondda Park & Ride	Llwynypia	*	**	↓↓	↓↓	**	*	**	*	**	**
Public Transport	South Wales Metro	Aberdare Broadway Cilfynydd Llwynypia Miskin Mt Ash Nantgarw Pontypridd Treforest	**	** *	↓↓ ↓	↓↓ ↓	** *	*	** *	*	**	** *
	Valley Lines Electrification	Broadway Pontypridd	*	**	↓↓ ↓	↓↓ ↓	** *	*	** *	*	**	**

	<p>Coordinated Train & Bus Journeys By enabling linked up public transport the effective travel range and hence usability may increase</p>	All	**	**	↓↓↓ ↓	↓↓↓ ↓	** *	* *	**	**	**	**	** *
	<p>Combined Public Transport Ticketing Combined ticketing options can reduce complexity to users</p>	All	**	**	↓↓↓ ↓	↓↓↓ ↓	** *	* *	**	**	**	**	** *
Active Travel	<p>Cycle lanes Increasing demarcated cycle lane provision to improve usability</p>	Aberdare Broadway Cymmer Ferndale Llanharan Llwynypia Mountain Ash Church Village Pontypridd Tonyrefail Tylorstown	*	**	↓↓↓	↓↓↓	*	* *	** *	*	**	**	**
	<p>School Routes Improvements Improvement to designated school active travel routes to improve usability and encourage use</p>	Aberdare Broadway Cymmer Ferndale Llanharan Llwynypia Mountain Ash Church Village Pontypridd Tonyrefail Tylorstown	**	**	↓↓↓	↓↓↓	*	* *	**	**	**	**	** *
	<p>Short Trip Active Travel Support Using innovative information technology and associated infrastructure to offer short term bicycle hire to support spontaneous travel choices.</p>	All	*	**	↓	↓	*	* *	**	*	**	**	**

Emission Controls	Taxi Emission Standards Cross-board licensing requirements stipulating an enhanced emission standard for the fleet	All	*	**	↓↓	↓↓↓ ↓	**	*	** *	*	*	** *
	School Transport Standards Contract requirements stipulating an enhanced emission standard for the fleet	All	**	** *	↓↓	↓↓↓ ↓	**	*	** *	**	**	** *
	RCT Fleet Standards Procurement rules stipulating an enhanced emission standard for the fleet	All	**	**	↓↓	↓↓↓ ↓	**	*	** *	**	**	** *
	Low Emission Zone Designating a geographical area (normally a town centre) that only a vehicle (or class of vehicles) meeting a specified emission standard can enter	Aberdare Pontypridd	**	*	↓↓	↓↓↓ ↓	*	*	** *	*	*	*
Indirect	Electric Vehicle Charging Installing or supporting the installation of wide-scale public or targeted charging points	All	** *	** *	↓↓↓ ↓	↓↓↓ ↓	**	* *	** *	*	** *	** *
	Green Infrastructure Using carefully designed trees and hedge planting to mitigate the flow of air pollution from a source to a relevant population	Aberdare Broadway Church Village Cilfynydd Mwyndy Nantgarw Pontypridd	**	** *	↓	↓↓↓ ↓	**	*	**	**	**	** *

Engineered	Hard Engineered Barriers Using solid barriers (such as acoustic barriers) to mitigate the flow of air pollution from a source to a relevant population	Cilfynydd Mwyndy Nantgarw Nightingales Bush Pontypridd Treforest	**	*	↓↓ ↓				** *	**	*	*	
	Behavioural	Travel Information Providing travel information to enable the public to make informed public transport choices	All	*	**			**	* *	*	**	** *	** *
		Staff Inducement LA workplace schemes that encourage travel planning or the uptake of active travel options	All	*	*	↓	↓↓	*	*	*	*	*	**
		School Engagement Improving awareness of the current situation amongst the young and the choices that can be made to improve things	All	*	*	↓	↓	*	*	*	*	*	**
		Clean Air Day Events Targeted events (centred around June) to reinforce the national messaging around Clean Air day	All	*	*	↓	↓	*	*	*	*	*	**
Domestic Heating Inducement Targeting grant aid to enable solid fuel only users to adopt cleaner alternatives	All	*	**		↓↓	**		** *	*	*	*		

	Development Control Adopting planning policies that places sustainable development and the 'agent of change' principles firmly within the LDP	All	*	**	↓↓	↓↓	**	**	*	**	**
Reactive	Relocation of Population Removing, possibly via CPO, those members of the public that reside within the smaller AQMAs	Llanharan Mwyndy Nantgarw Nightingales B. Treforest	** *		↓			** *	**		*
	Do Nothing	All	*	*				*	*	*	*

Table C: Potentially viable actions that could deliver air quality improvement

No.	Deliverability	Action	Area	Impact					Aligned with PSB Priority	Likelihood Without Prioritisation
				AQMA	Regional AQ	Noise	Climate Change	Financial		
1	Near Term Deliverable	Traffic Light Signal Improvements Traffic management (especially of road junctions) can result in local traffic congestion which in turn can result in locally elevated levels of air pollution. The Church Village, Llwynypia and Tonyrefail are likely to be affected by existing light controlled traffic management measures that could have the potential to be modified or upgraded to either allow more efficient management or to benefit the worst case area of the AQMA at potential slight detriment to elsewhere.	Rhonda Taff	*	*	-	-	*	-	*
2	Near Term Deliverable	Increased Parking Enforcement Illegally parked cars along	Rhonda	**	*	↓	↓	*	-	*

		<p>narrow carriageway roads can lead to significant short-term congestion when traffic cannot smoothly pass the temporary obstruction. Cymmer, Ferndale, Tonyrefail and Tylorstown have, to some degree, parking restrictions to prevent impediment. To maintain their relevance it is necessary to enforce the restrictions. Consider possible targeted enforcement actions in these areas (potentially at the expense of enforcement elsewhere).</p>								
3	Near Term Deliverable	<p>Travel Information Providing readily digestible travel information (e.g. public transport area options leaflet) can improve awareness and help the public pick sustainable travel options. Compiling and dissemination of information can be a useful element in helping to improve uptake.</p>	RCT	*	**	↓	↓	*	*	**

4	Near Term Deliverable	<p>School Engagement Future change is most likely to be brought about by today's young people, informing young people at an early stage of the relevance of air quality and its part in the environment can not only bring about change in the present but also help make the change sustainable for the future. School engagement could include incorporating local environmental information (i.e. air quality) into the current syllabus, advancing</p>	RCT	*	*	↓	↓	*	-	*
5	Near Term Deliverable	<p>Development Control Policies Air Quality can be dramatically affected by future development, likewise future development can play both a direct and supportive role in advancing local air quality management. Placing air quality and noise within LDP policy and consideration of specific</p>	RCT	*	**	↓↓	↓↓	**	-	*

		Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) could help safeguard current improvements and deliver sustainable future communities.								
6	Near Term Deliverable	Clean Air Day Events Delivering a series of events in associated with the nationally planned Clean Air Day in June. Events could comprise of a range of actions including supportive press release and signposting to national or regional events, ULEV demonstrations, school/community engagement, street party takeover or no-car day, etc. High profile events (no-car days) tend to have a greater effect in larger urban areas and may not be appreciated/practical for all members of the community.	RCT	*	*	↓	↓	*	-	*
7	Medium Term Possible	Llanharan Bypass New road infrastructure that bypasses the centre of Llanharan (the	Taf	** *	*	↓↓	-	** *	-	***

		location of the AQMA). The new road will be designed in accordance with modern practices so as to minimise congestion and maintain where possible distances from existing residences. It is likely the vast majority traversing the existing Bridgend Road will be displaced onto the new Bypass dramatically reduced the local sources of air pollution. Active travel routes and links will be incorporated in the design.								
8	Medium Term Possible	Off-Road Bus Stops Busses stopping along narrow carriageway roads can lead to significant short-term congestion when traffic cannot pass the temporary obstruction (this can be most observed for projected bus stops). Church Village, Tonyrefail and most notably Tylorstown have current bus stops that can impede traffic flow. By moving	Rhonda Taff	**	*	↑	↓	**	-	*

		<p>the bus stop into an engineered lay-by or less obstructed area or re-designating nearby parking to allow the bus to move out of the flow of traffic this may reduce congestions.</p> <p>However, due to local urban layout or service requirements it may not be possible to deliver this action</p>								
9	Medium Term Possible	<p>South Wales Metro</p> <p>A regional scheme to deliver substantive sustainable public transport options across several strategic corridors within RCT.</p>	RCT	**	** *	↓↓↓ ↓	↓↓↓ ↓	***	*	***
10	Medium Term Possible	<p>School Routes Improvements</p> <p>The likelihood of use of active travel routes can rely upon a number of factors, including distance, facilities, awareness and users perception. It may be possible for a number of improvements (surfacing, lighting, signposting, bike storage, awareness raising, walking-bus assistance,</p>	RCT	**	**	↓↓	↓↓	**	*	*

		etc) to be considered which could reduce current dependence on short distance private transport.								
11	Medium Term Possible	Short Trip Active Travel Support Using innovative information technology and associated infrastructure to offer short term bicycle hire to support spontaneous travel choices, for instance NextBike in Cardiff. This could be designed to encourage mixed active travel and public transport options.	RCT	*	**	↓	↓	**	**	*
12	Medium Term Possible	Staff Inducement Large employers (like RCT) can play an important part in incentivising their staff to pick sustainable travel options during the commute. This could include travel planning, car share, bike to work, etc)	RCT	*	*	↓	↓↓	*	-	**
13	Aspirational	Designated Off-Street Parking Legally parked cars along narrow carriageway roads can lead to significant long-	Rhonda	**	*	-	↑	***	*	*

	<p>term congestion when traffic cannot smoothly pass the frequent obstruction. Cymmer, Ferndale, Tonyrefail and Tylorstown have parking arrangements that can impede traffic flow. Due to urban layout, local residents may have no option but to park on the road. By creating a designated space to enable off-street parking in coordination with restructuring current local parking provisions it may be possible to remove the obstruction. Future proofing could enable this provision to include EV charging points bringing this vital future technology to communities that may otherwise experience significant role-out challenges. As free space is at a premium it may be the case that spatial repurposing will be necessary, this could be targeted at under</p>								
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		utilised land use (long term empty properties) but may be limited by the need to ensure community cohesion.								
14	Aspirational	Coordinated Train & Bus Journeys The linking of bus and train journeys can significantly improve the desirability and likelihood of use of public transport options. This could be particularly beneficial for areas where train services have been withdrawn in the past. Would likely require multi-level engagement (LA cannot deliver in isolation).	RCT	**	**	↓↓↓ ↓	↓↓↓ ↓	**	*	**
15	Aspirational	Combined Public Transport Ticketing Single ticketing could significantly improve the desirability and likelihood of use of public transport options by reducing fare complexity and service uncertainty.	RCT	**	**	↓↓↓ ↓	↓↓↓ ↓	**	*	**
16	Aspirational	Taxi Emission Standards Locally licensed taxi and private	RCT	*	**	↓↓↓	↓↓↓ ↓	**(* *)	*	***

		hire vehicles can comprise an important part of the local fleet, especially in urban hubs. Most operators may be able to make use of LEV technology, albeit current fleet options and costs may not encourage early uptake. New licensing policy could enable the early adoption of LEV technology and also support wider acceptance of LEV technology. However, mandating adoption could bring forward financial implications, at least in the short-term, for operators. It may be necessary to coordinate any intervention with actions to improve local charging infrastructure, reduce capital barriers and consistency across other licensing authorities to maintain a functional market.								
17	Aspirational	School Transport Standards Bus transport can significantly	RCT	**	** *	↓↓	↓↓ ↓	***	-	*

		<p>contribute to elevated levels of air pollution with improvements to the fleet may have a disproportionately better effect on local air pollution. Although the public bus fleet is of a relatively modern standard (Euro V and above), it can take some time (end of vehicle life) for similar standards to be adopted by the dedicated school bus transport fleet. Contracting of service provisions could look to set fleet emission standards that would potentially not otherwise be achieved in the quickest possible timeframe. It is likely such action would require premium payments and could have significant short term consequences to current providers (that it may become WG policy for LEV bus transport to be adopted by 2028).</p>								
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18	Aspirational	<p>RCT Fleet Standards</p> <p>The LA makes use of a large dedicated mixed fleet, some of which could make use of LEV technology (this would require both vehicle and infrastructure changes). New procurement rules could be considered that prioritises future LEV adoption (if suitable infrastructure is available). Not only could this have a direct improvement it could also demonstrate the option to other large fleet operators (UHB) and help establish local charging infrastructure.</p>	RCT	**	**	↓↓	↓↓↓	***	-	**
18	Aspirational	<p>Electric Vehicle Charging</p> <p>LEV (preferably EV) are considered a vital component in delivering sustainable low polluting future transport. It is likely that one factor in the adoption of LEVs is the availability of charging infrastructure. It is also the case that some areas of RCT may prove more</p>	RCT	** *	** *	↓↓↓	↓↓↓	***	-	*

		challenging, due to urban layout and deprivation, in technology role out. Targeted public intervention to establish a charging network may help encourage uptake.								
19	Aspirational	Green Infrastructure Although local green infrastructure is unlikely to be of a scale to directly affect air pollution production within RCT. It can be potentially used, in very carefully considered scenarios (inappropriate use could make matter worse), for instance to mitigate the flow of air pollution and protect local residents or to provide areas where the public can easily access that that are markedly lower in air pollution when compared to the locality. For instance, the A470, in part, observes benefit from existing green infrastructure separating the local community from this major source of	RCT	**	** *	↓	↓↓ ↓	**	-	*

		<p>Nitrogen Dioxide. It is possible that certain places (e.g Ysgol Evan James (Pontypridd), Parclewis (Broadway), Cymmer Jnr. (Cymmer)) could benefit from "green walls" which create a barrier between a road and nearby people. The preservation and improvement of potential 'tranquil spaces' (eg Aberdare Park, Ynysangharad Park) can enable the public to 'escape' everyday air pollution exposure. The use of green infrastructure to reduce power usage at buildings can also help to reduce the sources of some local air pollution</p>							
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