



RHONDDA CYNON TAF

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

A hybrid meeting of the CABINET will be held on
Monday, 15th November, 2021 at 10.00 am

Contact: Emma Wilkins - Council Business Unit (Tel No. 07385406118)

Councillors and members of the public wishing to request the facility to address the Cabinet on any of the business as listed below, must request to do so by 5pm on the Thursday, 11 November 2021 Councillors and Members of the public should stipulate if this address will be in the medium of English or Welsh.

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

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

1. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

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

Note:

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

2. MINUTES

To receive the minutes of the Cabinet Committee meetings held on the 4th and 18th October as accurate records.

(Pages 5 - 18)

3. COUNCIL'S PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES (QUARTER 2)

To receive the report of the Director, Finance and Digital Services, which provides Members with an overview of the Council's performance, both from a financial and operational perspective, based on the first six months of this financial year (to the 30th September 2021).

(Pages 19 - 46)

4. COUNCIL TAX BASE FOR 2022-23

To receive the report of the Director, Finance and Digital Services, which formally sets the Council Tax Base for the financial year 2022/23.

(Pages 47 - 52)

5. PUBLIC SERVICES OMBUDSMAN FOR WALES - ANNUAL REPORT AND LETTER 2020-2021

To receive the report of the Director of Legal Services advising Cabinet of the publication of the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales' ('PSOW') Annual Report and Annual Letter to this Council for 2020-2021.

(Pages 53 - 78)

6. PROGRESS UPDATE ON THE DELIVERY OF REGENERATION IN PONTYPRIDD TOWN CENTRE

To receive the report of the Director for Prosperity and Development providing Members with a progress update in respect of the delivery of regeneration in Pontypridd Town Centre.

(Pages 79 - 86)

7. UPDATE REPORT ON ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING STRATEGY & IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

To receive the report of the Director of Corporate Estates providing Members with an update on the work undertaken in developing a Council Strategy for Electric Vehicle Charging (EVC) following the formal consultation undertaken and how the proposed strategy relates to the wider RCT Council Net Zero and Carbon Reduction commitments.

(Pages 87 - 148)

8. URGENT ITEMS

To consider any urgent business as the Chairman feels appropriate.



Service Director of Democratic Services & Communication

Circulation:-

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

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

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RHONDDA CYNON TAF

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL CABINET

Minutes of the hybrid meeting of the Cabinet held on Monday, 4 October 2021 at 11.00 am

Details of the webcast for this meeting can be found [here](#)

County Borough Councillors - Cabinet Members in attendance:-

Councillor A Morgan (Chair)

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

Others in attendance

Councillor G Caple
Councillor P Jarman

Officers in attendance

Mr C Bradshaw, Chief Executive
Mr C Hanagan, Service Director of Democratic Services & Communication
Mr P Mee, Group Director Community & Children's Services
Mr R Evans, Director of Human Resources
Mr D Powell, Director of Corporate Estates
Mr S Gale, Director of Prosperity & Development
Mr A Wilkins, Director of Legal Services
Mr B Davies, Director of Finance & Digital Services
Ms L Davies, Director, Public Health, Protection and Community Services
Ms G Davies, Director of Education and Inclusion Services

55 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

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

56 21ST CENTURY SCHOOL MODERNISATION PROGRAMME - BAND B UPDATE

The Director of Education & Inclusion Services provided Members with an update on the Council's revised 21st Century Schools Strategic Outline Programme (SOP), recently approved in principle by the Welsh Government.

Members were provided with an overview of the projects taken forward which included

- Completion of Hirwaun Primary
- Progression of works at YGG Aberdar on site and progressing well;

- Progression of works at YG Rhydywaun on site and progressing well;
- Planning consultation has commenced for a new Welsh medium school in Rhydyfelin;
- Detailed design is nearing completion for 3 new primary schools funded through MIM, these are Pontyclun Primary, Penygawsi Primary and Llanilltud Faerdref Primary;
- The creation of 2 all-through schools is progressing in Pontypridd and Hawthorn; and
- The new 6th form teaching block and significant improvements to Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School are at the design stage

The Director advised that the significant increase in 21st Century Schools and Colleges funding for Rhondda Cynon Taf provided an exciting opportunity for more learners and the communities to benefit from improved educational and community facilities. Members were advised that the programme allowed more learners to be taught through the medium of Welsh and supports the access of more vulnerable learners to 21st Century Schools' facilities.

It was advised that the Programme would deliver exciting opportunities for the community focussed schools' agenda, putting schools at the heart of the community and would allow the Council to continue to deliver its ambitious goal to make every school a great school.

The Cabinet Member for Education & Inclusion Services spoke of the exciting proposal with the investment commenting that the original SOP totalled £167 million of investment and the new Programme totalling £252 million, which was a substantial increase that enabled a further £85 million to be invested in the schools of Rhondda Cynon Taf.

The Cabinet Member stressed that the programme created additional capital and investment and did not create closure of facilities.

The Cabinet Member for Enterprise, Development and Housing welcomed the news and spoke of the desperate need for improvements faced by some school buildings citing Penrhys school and questioned the Director in respect of timescales to which the Director responded, advising of the 5 year programme.

At this juncture in the meeting and with the permission of the Leader, County Borough Councillor G Caple spoke on this item.

The Deputy Leader commented that it was pleasing to see the future investment being proposed which would allow the young people of the Authority to receive the best facilities available that they deserved.

The Leader commented that this was the biggest investment in schools to be taken forward and welcomed the investment across the County Borough.

Following discussions, it was **RESOLVED**:

1. To note that the investment in the approved Strategic Outline Programme has increased significantly from £167 million to £252 million, an increase of £85 million.

2. To receive further reports on projects as they develop and progress through the Welsh Government's 21st Century Schools and Colleges approval processes.

57 REVIEW OF SPECIAL SCHOOL PROVISION IN RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

The Director of Education and Inclusion Services provided Members with updated information following the [report](#) presented to Cabinet in February 2021 where Cabinet agreed to additional scoping work being undertaken including feasibility studies, where appropriate, to inform potential proposals for change in the Council's special school provision.

Members were advised that given the considerable changes planned in Wales in relation to the statutory provision required to meet the needs of learners with the implementation of new legislation, building a new special school, and creating further capacity in the Authority's current provision, would ensure that the Council successfully delivers on its statutory obligations.

The Cabinet Member for Education & Inclusion Services welcomed the report and the opportunities within which would address the demand within the Council's special school and accommodate the growth in learners. The Cabinet Member referenced the pressures facing special schools and commented that the proposal would increase the number of special schools from four to five which would meet the needs of learners.

At this juncture of the meeting and with permission of the Leader, County Borough Councillor P Jarman spoke on this item.

The Deputy Leader commented on the pressures within special schools and need to increase additional capital, commenting that the proposal within the report would alleviate such pressures.

Following discussions, it was **RESOLVED**:

1. To note the content of the report.
2. To acknowledge the pressures on the Council's special schools and the need for significant investment to increase capacity and manage increased demand.
3. To note that investment has been included within the Council's revised 21st Century Schools Strategic Outline Programme to invest in a new special school within the County Borough of Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT).
4. To receive further reports as the proposal develops and progresses in accordance with the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code, and Welsh Government's 21st Century Schools and Colleges statutory approval processes.

UPDATE ON WELSH GOVERNMENT REGULATIONS TO ESTABLISH CORPORATE JOINT COMMITTEES AND THE CHANGES TO THE CARDIFF CAPITAL REGION JOINT COMMITTEE

The Chief Executive provided Members with an overview of his report which provided an update in respect of Corporate Joint Committees (CJC's).

Members were reminded that the formation of CJC's was provided for in the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act adding that over time, CJC's would alter the landscape and governance of some strategic economic well-being, strategic planning and transportation functions currently undertaken by the constituent councils making up the CJC across the South East Wales Region or Welsh Government or another Welsh Government sponsored public body. It was advised that Welsh Government hope that they act as the catalyst to the development and implementation of collaborative arrangements across local government, where regional planning and delivery makes sense, using them as a means of maximising outcomes for the people of Wales by maintaining local democratic accountability, reducing complexity and making the best use of resources.

The Chief Executive continued by advising that in South East Wales, the Cardiff Capital Region Joint Committee Cabinet had sought to be proactive and agreed to transfer the functions under the City Deal agreement, previously approved by UK Government, Welsh Government and the ten councils in March 2016, to the South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee on 28th February 2022, the date when the economic well-being, strategic planning and transportation functions come into being for the new CJC.

The Leader thanked the Chief Executive for the update and advised that updates in respect of CJC's would be taken forward to Council in addition to Cabinet. The Leader spoke positively of the benefits of joint working, especially through the City Deal arrangements and referenced the many positive projects delivered through such working.

At this juncture in the meeting and with the permission of the Leader, County Borough Councillor P Jarman addressed the Cabinet on this item. In response to some of Councillor Jarman's comments in respect of City Deal the Chief Executive advised that the benefits of the arrangements were significantly over and above what could have been delivered without such working arrangements, referencing projects such as zipworld.

The Leader echoed these comments in respect of collaborative working and provided reassurance that the formation of CJC's would be taken forward only if it worked for the Authority.

Following discussions, it was **RESOLVED**:

1. To note the new regulations that have established the South East Wales CJC and the future development of the following functions across the region from 1 March 2022; (1) economic well-being, (2) strategic development planning, and (3) developing transport policies;
2. To note the decision of the Cardiff Capital Region Joint Committee

on 20th December 2021 to transfer its existing functions, that are principally in respect of the City Deal agreement as committed to by the ten South East Wales councils in March 2016, to the South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee on 28th February 2022. The transfer of the City Deal from the existing Joint Committee to the new Corporate Joint Committee, enables the smooth transition of the City Deal functions, which include existing regional economic well-being and transportation functions.

3. That additional updates are provided to Cabinet and Full Council, where appropriate as further detail is provided by Welsh Government into the powers and responsibilities of the South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee and the potential devolution of powers and functions from Welsh Government to the Corporate Joint Committee

59 CWM TAF MORGANNWG SAFEGUARDING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT 2020/2021

The Group Director, Community & Children's Services provided Cabinet with the Annual Report of the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board, which demonstrated its effectiveness in exercising its functions in the preceding financial year.

Members were provided with a summary of the key achievements of the Board and the focus on critical activity only in the past year, due to the pandemic.

The Cabinet Member for Adult Services and Welsh Language thanked the Board for the work undertaken and spoke of the huge challenges that fell under the safeguarding banner. The Cabinet Member referenced the new delivery models taken forward including new technology platforms and assessing risks with partners.

The Cabinet Member for Children's Services thanked the staff involved for their hard work.

Following discussions, it was **RESOLVED** to:

1. Note and endorses the content of the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board Annual Report for 2020/2021.

60 REPRESENTATIONS, COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS PROCEDURES ANNUAL REPORT

The Group Director, Community & Children's Services provided Cabinet with an overview of the operation and effectiveness of the Council's statutory Social Services complaints procedure between 1st April 2020 and 31st March 2021, which contained information on the background of the Social Services statutory complaints procedure, information on lessons learnt from complaints and performance data for Adults & Children's Social Services, together with achievements for 2020/21 and future developments.

The Cabinet Member for Adult Services and Welsh Language thanked the Customer Feedback, Engagement and Complaints Manager for the hard work constantly undertaken in dealing with all representations received. The Cabinet Member referenced the clear evidence of the robust procedures in place and was pleased to note the substantial decrease in complaints received, following a demanding year.

The Leader echoed the comments of the Cabinet Member and spoke of how the Council used the representations received to further improve on the services and provision provided.

The Cabinet Member for Children's Services spoke on the professional manner that the service dealt with the representation received.

Following discussions, it was **RESOLVED** to:

1. Agree the contents of the Social Services Annual Complaints report (attached as Appendix 1).
2. Note the work undertaken by the Social Services Complaints Team

61 FRONTLINE SERVICES; HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORTATION AND STRATEGIC PROJECTS SUPPLEMENTARY CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2021/22

The Director, Frontline Services referred Members to his report which set out the detailed capital programme for the additional funding allocated to maintaining the Council's highways and transportation network, further to the 21st September 2021 Cabinet approval of an additional £1.5M of capital funding for highway maintenance in 2021/22, and subject to positive consideration by Council on 29th September.

Members were provided with details of the highways improvements identified including carriage ways and footways improvements and Members were referred to appendix 1 of the report which further detailed the investment to be made. The Director added that the Council was one of the few Councils that had continued to make meaningful and significant investments in its highway network.

The Leader welcomed the report before Members and referenced the improvements already taken forward by the Council with £1.304M proposed schemes to be added to carriage ways, which would be further supplemented by £0.100M to carry out drainage improvements throughout the period. The Leader also referenced the £0.096M proposed schemes in respect of footways.

At this juncture in the meeting and with the permission of the Leader, County Borough Councillor P Jarman addressed the committee on this item.

The Deputy Leader commented on the challenges faced by all Local Authorities and referenced the investment that the Council had continued to take forward and complimented the service for the work delivered and continued to deliver.

Following discussions, it was **RESOLVED** to:

1. Note and approve the Supplementary Capital Programme for Highways, Transportation and Strategic Projects as detailed within this report.

2. Note that the current allocations are part of a 3-year capital programme and delegate authority to the Group Director, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Director of Finance and Digital Services, to extend activity to deliver additional projects during the financial year where capacity exists for accelerated delivery in accordance with the purpose of the wider programme, or to suspend programmes/projects and reallocate funding to optimise delivery.

62 IMPROVING THE COUNCIL'S RECRUITMENT PROCESS FOR THE ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY

The Service Director, Democratic Services & Communication provided Members with an overview of the Joint report which provided Cabinet with a number of options that could improve the Council's recruitment process, so as to make it easier for the Armed Forces Community and veterans to overcome barriers to civilian employment.

Members were advised that the main proposal was the introduction of a Guaranteed Interview Scheme for Armed Forces service leavers, reservists and veterans if they meet the vacancy essential criteria.

The Deputy Leader referenced the positive track record of the Authority with working with Armed forces and spoke of the Armed Forces Covenant and gold recognition award. The Member referenced the transferable skills veterans possessed which the Council could benefit from. Cabinet were advised that the Armed Forces Working Group were very supportive of the proposals.

At this juncture in the meeting and with the permission of the Leader County Borough Councillor P Jarman addressed the Committee.

The Leader took the opportunity to thank the Deputy Leader for the work that she undertook in respect of Armed forces and veterans and welcomed the proposals within the report.

Following discussions, it was **RESOLVED:**

1. To note and agree to the implementation of a Guaranteed Interview Scheme for service leavers, veterans and reservists.
2. To agree that the Council works with the Career Transition Partnership, a no cost recruitment service for organisations seeking highly motivated and experienced veterans, who are leaving the Armed Forces.
3. To agree that the Council works with Forces Families Jobs, a no cost recruitment service supporting members of the Armed Forces Community into employment.
4. To agree to include a strap line on job advertisements welcoming

applications from the ex-forces community.

63 EXEMPTION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

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

64 LIVING WAGE FOUNDATION - PAYMENT OF THE REAL LIVING WAGE FOR INDEPENDENT SECTOR SOCIAL CARE PROVIDERS AND DIRECT PAYMENT RECIPIENTS

The Group Director, Community & Children's Services provided his report to Cabinet which contained exempt information. The Group Director spoke of the growing and sustained pressures on domiciliary and residential care and in response to the recruitment and retention crisis in care and support the need for the Council to ensure an appropriate minimum level of pay for care workers which was a critical step towards supporting this essential workforce.

Members of the Cabinet spoke in support of the report and with the permission of the Leader, County Borough Councillor also addressed the Committee on this item.

Following discussions it was **RESOLVED**:

1. To formally commit to providing support for independent sector social care providers to ensure that all care workers are paid at a minimum of the Real Living Wage level, specifically, those commissioned (excluding specialist placements) to provide older people residential and nursing care, supported living, extra care and home care and personal assistants providing care and support through direct payments for Adult and Children's Services; and
2. To delegate responsibility to the Group Director of Community and Children's Services (in consultation with the Director of Legal Services) to engage with providers listed above and make the necessary contractual amendments; and
3. To formally write to Welsh Government seeking their assurance that core (base budget) funding is provided in this regard

This meeting closed at 12.30 pm

**Cllr A Morgan
Chairman.**



RHONDDA CYNON TAF

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL CABINET

Minutes of the hybrid meeting of the Cabinet held on Monday, 18 October 2021 at 10.00 am

Details of the webcast for this meeting can be found [here](#)

County Borough Councillors - Cabinet Members in attendance:-

Councillor A Morgan

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

Officers in attendance

Mr C Bradshaw, Chief Executive
Mr C Hanagan, Service Director of Democratic Services & Communication
Mr P Mee, Group Director Community & Children's Services
Mr R Evans, Director of Human Resources
Mr D Powell, Director of Corporate Estates
Mr S Gale, Director of Prosperity & Development
Mr A Wilkins, Director of Legal Services
Mr B Davies, Director of Finance & Digital Services
Ms L Davies, Director, Public Health, Protection and Community Services
Ms G Davies, Director of Education and Inclusion Services
Mr P Griffiths, Service Director – Finance & Improvement Services
Ms L Lawson – Performance Manager

65 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct County Borough Councillor M Norris declared the following personal interest in respect of agenda item 6 - The Council's Approach To Tackling Empty Homes, which is set out in the Empty Homes Strategy for the Period 2018-2021:- "I have made an application to the Valley Taskforce Empty Homes Grant Scheme".

66 MINUTES

RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the 21st and 23rd September Cabinet meeting as an accurate record, subject to the inclusion of a formal apology from Councillor Norris in respect of the 23rd September meeting.

67 GAMBLING ACT 2005 - STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES (LOCAL POLICY) 2022 - 2025

The Director Public Health, Protection & Community Services provided Members with a report which consider the revised Statement of Principles, under the provisions of the Gambling Act 2005 (i.e. the local policy statement for the

management of gambling activity within the boundary of Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council), for the period 2022 – 2025 in accordance with statutory requirements.

Members were advised that there is a statutory requirement to review the Statement of Principles on a 3 yearly basis and the current statement had therefore been subject to review. The Director advised that that the current Statement of Principles (2019-2022) remains broadly fit for purpose, however they had been reviewed to take account of legislative change and best practice.

The Cabinet Member for Stronger Communities, Well-being and Cultural Services commented on the report and the required review that needed to be undertaken highlighting the minor amendments that were being suggested within the principles as highlighted in 4.6 of the report before Members, which strengthened safeguarding arrangements for children, which the Member welcomed.

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. That following consideration of the new Gambling Act 2005 - Statement of Principles (Local Policy) 2022-25 to commend to the statement of Principles to Council for adoption in line with statutory requirements.

68 RCT THEATRES: 2021 CHRISTMAS OFFER SCREENINGS

The Director of Public Health, Protection & Community Services provided Members with a report which sought Cabinet approval for screening RCT Theatres' 2021 digital Christmas offer of 'Aladdin' at the Coliseum and Park and Dare Theatres free of charge, following the change to covid restrictions.

The Director explained that the offer would provide a festive family experience that was close to the regular festive offer. Members were provided details of the proposal which was to screen 'Aladdin' over a series of dates in December 2021 at each of the Council's theatres with tickets available free of charge to ensure equitable access to the Christmas offer for residents and children who may be digitally excluded.

The Cabinet Member for Stronger Communities, Well Being and Cultural Services welcomed the proposal and the opportunities for families with the free production. The Cabinet Member reflected on the difficult time experienced by the Arts and Culture service due to the pandemic and the positive position this opportunity provided going forward, while still ensuring public safety.

The Leader echoed the comments of the Cabinet Member and spoke of the activities missed out by young children and families due to the pandemic and the positive position the proposal provided in offering the screening to families to enjoy.

Following discussions, it was **RESOLVED**:

1. To approve the proposal to screen RCT Theatres' digital Christmas offer of 'Aladdin' at the Coliseum and Park and Dare Theatres in December 2021 as a cinema experience with tickets available free of charge.

69 LIVING LANDSCAPES PROJECT

The Director of Public Health, Protection & Community Services provided Members with an update on the progress made with the Living Landscapes Project and sought approval for the future progression of the Project to address the climate and biodiversity emergencies.

Members were advised that the Project had identified key programmes of work across 29 potential locations that would be of significant benefit to promoting the biodiversity of areas of Rhondda Cynon Taf. The Director sought Cabinet consideration to progress appropriate external funding applications related to the Pilot areas and deliver the Pilot phase of the Project as set out in the report.

The Cabinet Member for Stronger Communities, Well-being and Cultural Services thanked the Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group for their consideration of the project over previous months and commented that the Authority was rich in biodiversity opportunities as illustrated with the 29 key locations identified within the report. The Cabinet Member welcomed the advancements being made with project and referenced the extreme weather events witnessed across the County Borough and how some of the proposals would assist with water management across the landscape.

The Deputy Leader spoke of the climate change agenda and its high priority for the Council and referenced the importance of engaging with the voluntary sector to take forward this agenda.

Following discussions, it was **RESOLVED**:

1. That following consideration of the current progress of the Living Landscapes Project and the work highlighted within the report to further enhance the countryside and natural habitats of Rhondda Cynon Taf, Cabinet agreed to approve the list and delivery of the 29 sites identified by the Living Landscapes Project and associated funding arrangements

70 THE COUNCIL'S APPROACH TO TACKLING EMPTY HOMES, WHICH IS SET OUT IN THE EMPTY HOMES STRATEGY FOR THE PERIOD 2018-2021

The Director, Prosperity and Development provided Members with an update on the progress being made with the implementation of the Council's approach to tackling empty homes, which is set out in the Empty Homes Strategy for the period 2018 -2021.

Members were advised that despite the covid pandemic steady progress had been made with the implementation of the strategy and Members were given an overview of the types of work undertaken. The Director advised that the Council's approach to tackling empty homes was having a positive impact on the number of empty homes across the borough, with 1,144 interventions delivered over the last 2 years, which was above the provisional target of 400 per year. It was highlighted that 501 properties had been brought back into use through the strategy.

The Director concluded by advising that the current RCT Empty Homes Strategy was coming to an end therefore, extending the current strategy would allow time for a new strategy to be developed in readiness for implementation in April 2022.

The Cabinet Member for Enterprise, Development & Housing spoke positively of the outcomes identified through the strategy and the large number of properties being brought back into use.

The Leader thanked the officers involved in taking forward the strategy for their hard work and spoke of the importance of the grant funding received to help assist in the development of projects and initiatives within the strategy.

Following discussions, it was **RESOLVED**:

1. To note the information contained within this report and the progress made in bringing empty properties back into use in line with the RCT Empty Homes Strategy.
2. To approve that the current RCT Empty Homes Strategy be extended until March 2022, with a new strategy being developed for implementation in April 2022.

(**N.B** At the conclusion of this item the Leader left the meeting.)

71 THE COUNCIL'S DRAFT CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REPORT 2021/22

The Performance Manager provided Members with an overview of the Council's draft Corporate Performance Report (CPR) which contained progress for 2020/21 and plans for 2021/22 in respect of the Council's strategic priorities. It was also advised that the report before Members set out how the CPR enables the Council to meet its statutory reporting requirements.

Members were advised that the draft report for 2021/22 had been prepared against the backdrop of the Covid-19 pandemic and the content had been challenged and reviewed by Officers. The Performance manager explained that the report demonstrated the positive progress made over the last year in the context of the global, national and regional challenges in 2020/21, and puts in place ambitious and clear plans for the Council for 2021/22.

The Deputy Leader agreed that the report was an accurate reflection of the Council's position and provided information across all Council services of how well the Council were delivering to meet the needs of the residents and users of services across the County Borough. The Deputy Leader noted the challenges faced by the Council in respect of the covid pandemic and the extreme weather events which were reflected within the performance report.

The Cabinet Member for Corporate Services thanked officers for the comprehensive report, which he commented reflected the difficulties experienced over the past 12 months but also illustrated the improvements accomplished during such difficult times.

Following discussions, it was **RESOLVED**:

1. To endorse the draft Corporate Performance Report attached as Appendix 1 to the report and recommend its approval by Council on 20 October 2021.

72 ENGAGEMENT ON THE COUNCIL'S BUDGET 2022/23

The Service Director, Democratic Services & Communication informed Cabinet of the proposed approach to resident engagement and consultation in respect of the 2022/23 budget setting process, which looked to provide residents with the opportunity, via a range of methods, to provide feedback to the Cabinet on the budget setting process.

Members were advised of the proposed approach considered which would be taken forward across 2 phases. The first phase would take place in the autumn of 2021 and would aim to collect views on investment priorities, council tax levels and efficiency savings. Phase 2 would take place early in the New Year and provide opportunity to engage with residents on the draft strategy proposed by Cabinet. The Service Director advised that the specific dates were dependent on the release dates of the Welsh Government Settlement.

The Deputy Leader spoke of the importance of the engagement with the public in respect of the Council's budget and spoke of the options available to undertake such engagement through a mixture of online and face to face engagement.

Following discussions, it was **RESOLVED**:

1. To support an online approach to the Council's budget consultation for 2022/23, using the Council's new Let's Talk Engagement website along with the re-introduction of some face-to-face events in the community. Agreed that as part of the suggested approach, the Council will continue to provide alternative means of engagement for those having reduced or no access to the Internet and those who prefer to engage through traditional methods.
2. To support the Council's statutory requirements regarding consultation on the Council Tax Reduction Scheme and Council Tax levels, which will be met via the proposed approach.
3. To support the budget consultation process taking place during the autumn of 2021, with the dates to be confirmed following clarification of the Welsh Government budget settlement timescales.
4. To authorise the Service Director – Democratic Services & Communications to plan the necessary timeline of engagement once the details of the Provisional Local Government Settlement are known, in consultation with the appropriate Cabinet Member & Director of Finance & Digital Services.

73 UPDATE ON THE EDUCATION AND INCLUSION SERVICES SUPPORT FOR SCHOOLS AND PRUS IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19

The Director, Education & Inclusion Services provided Members with an overview of the progress the authority had made in relation to recommendations from the overarching thematic report Estyn published in January 2021, which involved a thematic review of practice across all 22 local authorities across Wales.

Members were provided with positive progress updates in relation to each of the 5 themes identified by Estyn and the Director advised that the authority would continue to work in close partnership with the regional School Improvement

Service and all its schools to ensure that strong progress is made against all the recommendations identified by Estyn in the thematic report.

The Cabinet Member for Education & Inclusion Services welcomed the report and the encouraging feedback provided through the engagement meetings and commented on the positive progress made against the recommendations.

Following discussions, it was **RESOLVED**:

1. That following consideration of the Estyn's letter on the Council's work to support schools to provide a quality provision during 2020-21, to note the report.

74 LEADERS SCHEME OF DELEGATION

The Service Director, Democratic Services and Communications provided Members with an update in respect of the recent changes by the Leader to the Scheme of Delegation, which included a change of membership to the Climate Change Cabinet Steering group and some admin updates to the scheme to reflect the changes within the Senior Leadership Team.

Members **RESOLVED** to note the update.

This meeting closed at 10.41 am

**Cllr M Webber
Vice Chair.**

CABINET

15th November 2021

COUNCIL PERFORMANCE REPORT – 30th September 2021 (Quarter 2)

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND DIGITAL SERVICES IN DISCUSSION WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER (CLLR NORRIS)

AUTHOR: Paul Griffiths, Service Director – Finance and Improvement Services (01443) 680609

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report provides Members with an overview of the Council's performance, both from a financial and operational perspective, based on the first six months of this financial year (to the 30th September 2021).

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- 2.1 Note the on-going impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on service delivery and, in parallel, the re-introduction of services as Covid-19 restrictions are lifted.

Revenue

- 2.2 Note and agree the General Fund revenue outturn position of the Council as at the 30th September 2021 (Section 2 of the Executive Summary) and note the incorporation of Welsh Government Covid-19 funding into this position to support on-going service delivery.

Capital

- 2.3 Note the capital outturn position of the Council as at the 30th September 2021 (Sections 3a – e of the Executive Summary).
- 2.4 Note the details of the Treasury Management Prudential Indicators as at the 30th September 2021 (Section 3f of the Executive Summary).

Corporate Plan Priorities

- 2.5 Note the Quarter 2 progress updates for the Council's Corporate Plan priorities (Sections 5 a – c of the Executive Summary).
- 2.6 Note the progress update to enhance the Council's short term and long-term response to extreme weather events (Section 6 of the Executive Summary).

3.0 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To agree the Council's financial and operational performance position as at the 30th September 2021 to enable elected Members and other stakeholders to scrutinise the performance of the Council.

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 This report provides Members with the second update of the Council's financial and operational performance position for the financial year ending the 31st March 2022.
- 4.2 The aim of the report is to bring together the Council's performance into an Executive Summary and make available more detailed information to the reader through electronic links. Information contained in the Executive Summary includes financial data, progress against our Corporate Plan priorities (with exceptions highlighted within the detailed sections to ensure that elected Members and other readers are able to quickly identify the key issues) and progress made to enhance the Council's response to extreme weather events.
- 4.3 Members will note that this report is set in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic continuing to pose significant challenges in the delivery of Council Services alongside on-going significant additional costs and income losses that have, to date, been funded in the majority of cases by Welsh Government. Further information in this regard is included within the Executive Summary.

5.0 QUARTER 2 REPORT

- 5.1 The Quarter 2 report is attached and comprises:
- **Executive Summary** – setting out, at a glance, the overall performance of the Council as at Quarter 2 (i.e. 30th September 2021).

- **Revenue Monitoring** – sections 2a – e setting out the detailed projected financial spend against budget across our Revenue Budget with exceptions highlighted.
- **Capital Monitoring** – sections 3a – e setting out capital spend across our Capital Programme with exceptions highlighted and section 3f covering Prudential Indicators.
- **Organisational Health** – includes information on turnover, sickness absence, organisational health related investment areas and Council strategic risks.
- **Corporate Plan Priorities** – three action plans (Sections 5a – c) setting out progress updates for the priorities of People, Places and Prosperity.
- **Enhancing the Council’s response to extreme weather events** - Section 6 setting out progress made to implement the recommendations agreed by Cabinet on [18th December 2020](#).

6.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS AND SOCI-ECONOMIC DUTY

- 6.1 The Council’s Performance Report provides an update on financial and operational performance for the first 6-months of 2021/22; as a result, there are no equality and diversity or socio-economic duty implications to report.

7.0 CONSULTATION

- 7.1 Following consideration by Cabinet, this Report will be presented to the Finance and Performance Scrutiny Committee for review, challenge and where deemed required, the scrutiny of specific areas in line with the Committee’s Terms of Reference. With specific regard to progress made to implementation recommendations to enhance the Council’s response to extreme weather events, this information will be scrutinised by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

8.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no financial implications as a result of the recommendations set out in the report.

9.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

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

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

10.1 The Corporate Plan progress updates included within this report align with the priorities as set out within the Council's Corporate Plan 2020 – 2024 "[Making a Difference](#)". With regard to the [Well-being of Future Generations Act \(Wales\) Act 2015](#), at the 4th March 2020 Council meeting, it was agreed that the Corporate Plan priorities would also serve as its Well-being Objectives in line with the Act.

11.0 CONCLUSION

11.1 This report sets out the financial and operational performance of the Council as at Quarter 2 2021/22, that is, 30th September 2021.

11.2 The Quarter 2 revenue budget position is projecting a £0.726M overspend and reflects the continuation of key pressures primarily within Adult and Children's Services. Work is underway across all services, as part of the Council's robust service and financial management arrangements, to contribute to bringing the financial position closer in line with budget.

11.3 The projected revenue budget position is set in the context of the significant on-going impact of Covid-19 on service delivery and takes into account additional Welsh Government funding to support additional costs and income losses as a direct result of the pandemic. Work will continue to closely monitor the Council's financial position, refresh financial forecasts as updated information becomes available and continue to engage with Welsh Government to highlight the importance of providing additional funding to support the financial implications of Covid-19 and also on-going permanent cost pressures.

11.4 Capital investment as at 30th September 2021 is £31.718M, with a number of schemes being re-profiled during the quarter to reflect changes in costs and also new external grant funding approvals received. The progress made during the first 6 months of the year continues the Council's approach of long-term and sustained investment in infra-structure, the impact of which is supporting visible improvements in assets across the County Borough, taking account of Covid-19 safety requirements.

11.5 With regard to the Council's Corporate Plan priorities of People, Places and Prosperity, positive progress has been made during quarter 2, building on the work undertaken in quarter 1.

11.6 The further progress update on the delivery of recommendations to enhance the Council's response to extreme weather events shows good progress overall, with key actions being taken forward to further strengthen the Council's arrangements.

Other Information:-

**Relevant Scrutiny Committee: Finance and Performance Scrutiny
Committee**

Contact Officer: Paul Griffiths

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

15th November 2021

COUNCIL PERFORMANCE REPORT – 30th September 2021 (Quarter 2)

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND DIGITAL SERVICES IN
DISCUSSION WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER (CLLR NORRIS)**

Item: 3

Background Papers

Officer to contact: Paul Griffiths

**COUNCIL PERFORMANCE REPORT
QUARTER 2 2021/22
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Contents

Section 1 – INTRODUCTION

Section 2 – REVENUE BUDGET

Revenue Budget Performance – more detailed breakdowns are included in the following sections:

- 2a Education and Inclusion Services;
- 2b Community and Children’s Services;
- 2c Chief Executive;
- 2d Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services; and
- 2e Authority Wide Budgets.

Earmark reserve update – Section 2f provides a breakdown of expenditure against service areas.

Section 3 – CAPITAL PROGRAMME

Capital programme budget – more detailed breakdowns are included in the following sections:

- 3a Chief Executive;
- 3b Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services;
- 3c Education and Inclusion Services;
- 3d Community and Children’s Services; and
- 3e Capital Programme Funding.

Prudential Indicators – a detailed breakdown is included in Section 3f.

Section 4 – ORGANISATIONAL HEALTH

- Turnover;
- Sickness Absence;
- Organisation Health related investment areas; and
- Council Strategic Risks.

Section 5 – CORPORATE PLAN

Corporate Plan priority progress updates – Quarter 2 position statements are included within the following sections:

- 5a – People;
- 5b – Places; and
- 5c – Prosperity.

Section 6 – ENHANCING THE COUNCIL’S RESPONSE TO EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS

Progress update on the implementation of recommendations agreed by Cabinet on 18th December 2020 to enhance the Council’s response to extreme weather events.

Section 1 – INTRODUCTION

This Executive Summary, bringing together and summarising the Council's financial and operational performance position as at 30th September 2021, is set within the context of Council service delivery operating within a very challenging environment as a result of the on-going impact of Covid-19, as was the case during 2020/21. This has required the Council, like all local authorities in Wales, to continue to adapt and change the way it provides services, many in partnership with others, to help meet the needs of residents and businesses. Where appropriate, service specific information has been included within this Executive Summary to provide the reader with a full as picture as possible in this regard.

In addition, throughout the Executive Summary electronic links have been included that enable the reader to access more detailed information, as required.

Section 2 – REVENUE BUDGET

Revenue Budget Performance

| Service Area | 2021/22 – as at 30 th September 2021 (Quarter 2) | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| | Full Year Budget £M | Projected Expenditure as at Quarter 2 £M | Variance Over / (Under) £M |
| Education & Inclusion Services (2a) | 195.596 | 195.501 | (0.095) |
| Community & Children's Services (2b) | 167.999 | 168.933 | 0.934 |
| Chief Executive (2c) | 30.722 | 30.435 | (0.287) |
| Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services (2d) | 60.235 | 60.362 | 0.127 |
| Sub Total | 454.552 | 455.231 | 0.679 |
| Authority Wide Budgets (2e) | 73.351 | 73.398 | 0.047 |
| Grand Total | 527.903 | 528.629 | 0.726 |

Welsh Government Covid-19 funding incorporated within the Quarter 2 position (30th September 2021)

The full year revenue budget variance, projected as at 30th September 2021, is a £0.726M overspend. This forecasted position assumes that additional costs and income losses as a direct result of the pandemic will be offset by the continuation of additional funding being made available by Welsh Government to all local authorities in Wales for the remainder of the 2021/22 financial year. Notwithstanding the on-going uncertainties associated with the pandemic, for example, the impact of moving to alert level zero in August 2021 and the effectiveness of the vaccination programme, the current estimated full year additional cost / income loss to the Council, forecasted at 30th September 2021, is £30M. This position will be kept under on-going review as part of the compilation and submission of monthly claims to Welsh Government (including with regard to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme) and updated information will be included within Performance Reports during the year.

For information, the specific financial assistance provided to local authorities includes: additional costs in respect of housing / homelessness, free school meal payments, Adult Social Services and staff cover due to absence; and income losses where there has been a need to temporarily suspend or reduce service provision (for example, Leisure Centres, Theatres and visitor attractions).

The Table below sets out the total forecasted full-year additional costs and income losses assumed to be recoverable.

| Service Area | Actual Additional Costs / Income Loss Recovered (Quarters 1 and 2) | Projected Additional Costs / Income Losses (Quarters 3 and 4) | Total Full Year Additional Costs / Income Losses (Actual and Projected)* |
|----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | £M | £M | £M |
| Education & Inclusion Services | -4.751 | -1.696 | -6.447 |
| Community & Children's Services | -9.562 | -8.287 | -17.849 |
| Chief Executive | -1.571 | -0.848 | -2.419 |
| Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services | -1.473 | -1.627 | -3.100 |
| Authority Wide | -0.153 | -0.087 | -0.240 |
| TOTAL | -17.510 | -12.545 | -30.055 |

* Excludes additional costs incurred / projected in respect of Test, Trace and Protect and supporting the delivery of the vaccination programme, the funding for which is being made available by Welsh Government and the Local Health Board respectively, in line with guidance.

Revenue budget variances projected at Quarter 2

1. Community and Children's Services

ADULT SERVICES

- Long Term Care & Support (£0.445M overspend);
- Commissioned Services (£0.414M overspend); and
- Short Term Intervention Services (£0.233M underspend).

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

- Safeguarding & Support (including Children Looked After) (£0.626M overspend);
- Early Intervention (£0.113M overspend);
- Cwm Taf Youth Offending Service (£0.133M underspend);
- Intensive Intervention (£0.184M underspend); and
- Management & Support Services (£0.083M underspend).

PUBLIC HEALTH AND PROTECTION

- Community Services (£0.085M underspend);
- Communities & Wellbeing (£0.051M underspend); and
- Leisure, Parks & Countryside and Community Facilities (£0.057M overspend).

2. Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services

FRONTLINE SERVICES

- Highways Management (£0.073M underspend);
- Transportation (£0.087M overspend);
- Strategic Projects (£0.095M underspend);
- Street Cleansing (£0.073M underspend); and
- Waste Services (£0.323M overspend).

3. Chief Executive

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

- Human Resources (£0.099M underspend);
- Legal Services (£0.058M underspend); and
- Finance & Digital Services (£0.070M underspend).

Earmark Reserve Update

- A breakdown of full year expenditure against approved earmark reserves for Service Areas can be viewed at Section 2f by [clicking here](#).

Section 3 – CAPITAL PROGRAMME

The Council and its contractors / suppliers have continued to ensure effective and safe working arrangements and, in doing so, enabled the on-going delivery of capital programme projects.

Capital Programme Budget

| Service Area | 2021/22 - as at 30 th September 2021 | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| | Capital Budget £M | Actual Expenditure £M |
| Chief Executive (3a) | 4.732 | 0.768 |
| Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services (3b) | 90.145 | 22.478 |
| Education & Inclusion Services (3c) | 37.445 | 7.191 |
| Community & Children's Services (3d) | 10.775 | 1.281 |
| Total | 143.097 | 31.718 |

Key Capital Variances at Quarter 2

- Re-profiling of a number of projects to reflect changes in the total cost of schemes and revised delivery timescales.
- Grant approvals introduced into the Capital Programme: Welsh Government (WG) Active Travel Fund (£0.706M); WG Safe Routes in the Community (£0.082M); WG Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Grant (£0.200M); WG Flood Recovery Funding (£14.298M); WG Coal Tip Grant (£2.977M); WG 21st Century Schools (£0.428M); WG Flying Start (£0.320M); WG Childcare Offer Capital Grant Programme (£0.271M); and UK Government Levelling Up Fund (£0.125M).

For information on how the Capital Programme is funded see section 3e by [clicking here](#).

Prudential Indicators

For a detailed breakdown of Prudential Indicators, see section 3f by [clicking here](#).

Section 4 – ORGANISATIONAL HEALTH

• Turnover

| Service Area | 2021/22 | | 2020/21 | | | | 2019/20 |
|----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------|---------------------------------------|-------------|-----------------------------------|-------------|---------------------------------------|
| | As at 30 th September 2021 | | As at 30 th September 2020 | | As at 31 st March 2021 | | As at 30 th September 2019 |
| | Staff Nos. | % Turnover | Staff Nos. | % Turnover | Staff Nos. | % Turnover | % Turnover |
| Turnover – Council Wide | 10,979 | 6.71 | 10,716 | 3.52 | 10,888 | 6.84 | 6.49 |
| Community & Children's Services | 2,939 | 6.46 | 2,931 | 2.87 | 2,946 | 6.59 | 4.73 |
| Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services | 921 | 7.60 | 957 | 2.61 | 941 | 6.70 | 3.54 |
| Education & Inclusion Services | 1,244 | 5.06 | 1,269 | 2.84 | 1,258 | 6.52 | 4.77 |
| <u>Schools</u> | <u>4,976</u> | <u>7.60</u> | <u>4,875</u> | <u>4.41</u> | <u>4,873</u> | <u>7.47</u> | <u>8.70</u> |
| Primary | 3,108 | 6.34 | 3,048 | 4.07 | 3,043 | 7.49 | 7.08 |
| Secondary | 1,868 | 9.69 | 1,827 | 4.98 | 1,830 | 7.43 | 11.50 |
| Chief Executive's Division | 899 | 4.00 | 684 | 2.49 | 870 | 4.83 | 5.84 |

• Sickness Absence

With specific regard to Covid-19 and the recording of sickness absence, where staff have been unavailable for work due to, for example, self-isolating, having an underlying condition that places an individual at risk, these occurrences have not been categorised as 'sickness absence' and as such are excluded from the analysis below.

| Service Area | 2021/22 | 2020/21 | | 2019/20 | |
|-------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| | As at 30 th September 2021 % | As at 30 th September 2020 % | As at 31 st March 2021 % | As at 30 th September 2019 % | As at 31 st March 2020 % |
| % days lost to sickness absence – Council Wide | 4.30 | 3.19 | 3.96 | 3.80 | 4.16 |
| Community & Children's Services | 6.80 | 5.53 | 6.14 | 5.42 | 5.59 |
| Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services | 5.47 | 4.37 | 4.99 | 3.91 | 4.74 |
| Education & Inclusion Services | 3.70 | 2.19 | 3.20 | 3.33 | 3.70 |
| <u>Schools</u> | <u>2.94</u> | <u>2.02</u> | <u>2.88</u> | <u>3.13</u> | <u>3.56</u> |
| Primary | 3.12 | 2.21 | 3.21 | 3.31 | 3.79 |
| Secondary | 2.63 | 1.70 | 2.33 | 2.83 | 3.18 |
| Chief Executive's Division | 3.27 | 1.65 | 2.62 | 2.39 | 2.39 |

For a more detailed breakdown of 2021/22 sickness absence information, click [here](#).

Organisation Health related investment areas

There will be a continued focus on investing in organisational health related areas, for example, IT infrastructure and invest to save energy efficiency schemes, with projects being delivered operationally within services across the Council.

- **Council Strategic Risks**

The Council's Quarter 2 Strategic Risk Register can be viewed by [clicking here](#) with specific updates included setting out the implications to date of Covid-19 and the work being undertaken / planned to mitigate the impact as much as possible.

Section 5 – CORPORATE PLAN

Corporate Plan priority action plans for 2021/22 were reported to and approved by full Council on the 20th October 2021 covering the three priorities of People, Places and Prosperity. A summary of the progress made across the three priorities as at 30th September 2021 is set out in Sections 5a – c and electronic links have been included to each approved action plan, providing more detailed information on progress.

Corporate Plan Priority Progress Update

- **PEOPLE** (Section 5a)

PEOPLE – Are independent, healthy and successful

Summary of progress to 30th September 2021

We have continued our work to support our residents who are older, vulnerable or who have disabilities, to remain independent and have a good quality of life. Our new extra care facility in Pontypridd, Cwrt yr Orsaf, is currently progressing well and is due to be completed by October 2021. We are also working on a business case and design options for a similar scheme in Treorchy. The planning application for the extra care scheme in Porth has been submitted and demolition work has begun on site.

We have also opened a supported accommodation scheme in Mountain Ash and all apartments have now been allocated. We will open a similar scheme in Llanhari following a refurbishment of Elm Road accommodation by the end of March 2022. We are also developing a supported accommodation strategy and investment plan to continue to provide a range of modern fit for purpose supported housing options for vulnerable people that meets their needs and is supported, where appropriate, by access to community facilities.

We are taking forward the Council's review on the future shape of residential care for older people to ensure we create the right model of service delivery to respond to increasing demand and changing needs. This includes drafting for approval a modernisation programme and investment plan for the Council's 9 care homes in line with Care Inspectorate Wales standards.

We are working with carers and partners to ensure respite provision is meeting the needs of both the people who use services and their carers so that people are able to live in their family homes for longer.

Demand for domiciliary care remains high in line with increasing need for this service. We continue to work with homecare providers to build capacity and resilience to improve market stability and ensure we can meet demand and ensure good quality care. As a result, we have not made as much progress as we would have liked to review and redesign our domiciliary care support model. We are also building on our engagement and learning from the pandemic to inform the transformation of day services going forward so that people with a learning disability have access to meaningful activity and opportunities in their own communities, including employment to achieve their personal goals and live ordinary lives. A range of engagement activity is underway, supported by the launch of the ""[My Day My Way](#)"" website to provide an engagement platform so that people can explain the things that are important to them, and how they would improve urgent day services.

We continue to encourage all residents to lead active and healthy lifestyles and maintain their mental wellbeing. Following the easing of Covid restrictions, we opened the new gym at Llys Cadwyn in Pontypridd and reopened Lido Ponty following the damage caused by Storm Dennis in

PEOPLE – Are independent, healthy and successful

February 2020. The Lido Ponty was set to close its doors for the main 2021 season on October 3, having welcomed over 85,000 visitors this year alone – despite the restrictions that remain in place due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. However, due to popular demand, it was decided to extend the main season until Friday 29th October to allow more visitors to enjoy it.

We also have a full programme of outdoor exercise opportunities throughout RCT leisure facilities and Parks (where applicable). One outdoor rig has been installed in Ynysangharad Park and others planned for Dare Valley Country Park and Abercynon Sports Centre. We are also developing a plan for wider community outdoor opportunities and promotion of increased participation to encourage residents to utilise our outdoor spaces. We are also planning to further develop the online Leisure for Life offer to allow members to access classes and workouts at home. Equipment has been purchased and staff now require training.

Work has commenced on the Treorchy Cultural Hub, with the works to Treorchy Library due to be completed by December 2021. A Community Engagement Plan is also being developed to ensure that our theatres are more inclusive and accessible to the whole community. We have continued to plan for online and blended delivery until the end of the year. It is now planned that theatres will reopen for live events during Quarter 4 in line with Welsh Government guidance.

We are working with our partners to ensure adequate support to meet resident needs is available through collaboration with third and voluntary sector. We have co-produced community booklets to build relationships amongst Community Organisations/Groups and local neighbourhood network discussions have commenced with key partners / organisations. Mapping of areas to support residents' needs is ongoing.

We are working with Health to explore options for the development of an integrated community health and social care locality model and have commenced a review of options for an integrated community model. We are also working together to improve patient experience and redesign the pathways for integrated primary and community based urgent care services and 'home first' discharge from hospital services. This includes a review and refresh of the hospital discharge protocol, including performance standards and measures to deliver effective transfers of care from Royal Glamorgan Hospital. We also continue to deliver SW@H Phase 1 and 2 projects as part of Regional ICF and Transformation Programmes. An evaluation of the project continues in line with the Regional Transformation Programme and draft options appraisal work has commenced. We are also working with Health to review and improve end of life community care to ensure that any current issues are addressed, and care meets the person's needs. Our work to review and redesign Community Mental Health Services with Health is ongoing. As part of this we will complete a review of current Community Mental Health Services and develop options to redesign our joint Service offer to meet current and future need and demand pressures.

Using the RCT Neighbourhood Network Groups, we will begin to co-produce/design with partners a social prescribing model. Following development of the social prescribing model, we will work with partners to review gaps in provision and identify ways to address unmet needs. This work will be taken forward in 2022/23 when staff are released from the Track Trace and Protect Service.

Our priority is to improve services for children and young people and ensure the needs of children are considered in everything we do. We will ensure that the emotional wellbeing and mental health needs of children and young people aged 0-25 and their families are central to the delivery of services. This work has included delivering a programme of Targeted Play provision for vulnerable 5–14-year-olds with care and support needs, piloting a Wellbeing Support Programme for children aged 8-11 years requiring one to one support to improve their wellbeing and build their resilience

PEOPLE – Are independent, healthy and successful

and enhancing the provision of support to 16-25 year olds delivered by the Youth Engagement and Participation Service (YEPS). YEPS has undergone a restructure to bring together all support services for young people aged 16 - 25. The 16+ Support Team is assisting young people transition out of statutory education, tackling youth homelessness and offering key life skills qualifications to support young people to transition into adulthood.

We will continue to strengthen participation of children and young people to promote engagement specifically with Children Looked After and partner agencies to ensure coproduction and that the voice of children and young people are heard in service development and delivery. We are developing a Participation Strategy and incorporating different communication approaches when engaging with children and young people. We are seeking to provide effective Edge of Care services to ensure that children, young people and families receive the right support at the right time, supporting their physical and mental wellbeing. This includes development of the Regional MAPPS Service (Therapeutic Regional Service for Children Looked After). The commissioning process will be completed in January 2022.

We continue to focus on enhancing the wellbeing of our learners. The Integrated Wellbeing Pathway which was established during the pandemic to help children return to school has been reviewed and is continuing to operate. Additional funding has been secured to continue the additional capacity for dedicated stress and anxiety courses that young people can access outside of school. We have also purchased Play therapy and devised a well-being programme with Bluemind for families to help them address their emotional well-being issues that have been exacerbated by the pandemic. During the summer holidays, we delivered the school holiday enrichment programme (SHEP) to 15 schools and we are currently evaluating the programme. We are also implementing our Action Plan for Enhanced Counselling Support for Children and Young People to further improve our school-based counselling provision. Our work with Continuing Care and the CAHMS service is not progressing as planned due to recruitment issues. We are now looking at alternative ways of delivering emotional wellbeing outcomes in-house.

We are delivering the Early Years Transformation agenda in Rhondda Cynon Taf in order to ensure early years services are universally available and specialist services are targeted by need and not geographical location. Funding has been secured to undertake the technical development of the Early Years Vulnerability Profile. A pilot which is utilising health data alongside Council data to build a full profile is progressing well and all relevant health information for 0–1-year-olds has been transferred to the Council's database. A full test of health data will begin in October 2021. Work has commenced to produce a 3-year strategic plan for the region identifying key milestone and outcomes at each stage. Work is ongoing to widely communicate operational changes to families, community organisations and providers. An information leaflet has been produced to share information with families on the changes; meetings have taken place with other Local Authorities to share good practice from RCT's Early Years Transformation Project; and a workshop has taken place with all Health Visitors to reiterate the changes.

The full action plan can be viewed by [clicking here](#).

Investment Priority Progress Update – Quarter 2

| Progress in our Investment Priorities – PEOPLE | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Investment Area | Investment Value¹ £M | Quarter 2 Update |
| Extracare Housing | 6.974 | <p>This investment funding covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The former Maesyffynnon Home for the Elderly site (Aberaman) – completed and the first residents moved into the new facility in May 2020. • Pontypridd - works commenced in July 2019 and are progressing well with the project due to be completed in October 2021. • Porth - agreed by the Council's Cabinet on 3rd December 2020. Progress to date includes: the vacation of the building; site surveys completed; demolition works commenced; and preparatory work underway to enable the main contract works to be tendered. <p>Consideration of development proposals for Treorchy and Mountain Ash schemes are on-going.</p> |
| Tackling Poverty Fund | 0.300 | This investment funding, along with Arbed funding, is to help address areas where there are high levels of poverty (including fuel poverty) to increase the disposable income of households, for example, by supporting households to reduce energy bills, helping to overcome barriers to find employment. |
| Total | 7.274 | |

¹ Investment Value – relates to LIVE projects / works only that have been allocated additional investment funding.

o **PLACES** (Section 5b)

PLACES - Where people are proud to live, work and play

Summary of progress to 30th September 2021

The Council's Enforcement Team continues to tackle environmental crime. 1,891 fly-tipping incidents have been recorded this year to date, 346 more incidents than reported in the same period of 2019/20. Parking enforcement and focussed work with landlords regarding communal bin collection points continues.

Work is on-going to encourage good recycling practices that will reduce municipal waste and have a positive effect on the environment. Our recycling trailer has been out in communities during [Recycling Week](#) (September 20th – 26th) promoting the 'Be Mighty and step it up for recycling and climate change!' campaign. The tonnage of recycled waste for quarters 1 and 2 is higher than the same period last year (50,645 tonnes compared to 48,791 tonnes in 2020/21) and our overall recycling percentage² has increased to 71% (68.53% at Quarter 2 in 2020/21). This figure now incorporates a higher proportion of wood recyclable materials that had previously been in storage. This position also exceeds the Welsh Government target of 70% recycling by 2025.

We continue to progress our climate change agenda through developments in alternative fuelled fleet vehicles, public transport and taxis; looking at ways where we can create renewable energy; reuse of hard plastic; development of the Eco Park at Bryn Pica; and implementing procurement policies to reduce the use of single use plastic items. A successful trial of an EV van has also been undertaken with positive performance feedback on the range and drive. The Council's Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy is currently out to consultation, and an Implementation Plan is in the process of being drafted. Three EV charging points have been installed for Electric Taxis at Pontypridd, Porth and Aberdare, and work is progressing to connect to the electricity supply to enable the charging points to be brought into use. A report has also been presented to the Licensing Committee on [14th September 2021 \(Item 52\)](#) that agreed to temporarily amend licensing conditions to enable the operation of the five electric taxi vehicles delivered as part of the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal "try before you buy" taxi trial.

Our highways investment programme activity continues across the County Borough, together with work on repairs and flood mitigation measures. Various schemes have been completed to date including:

- Talbot Road/ A4119 Junction – traffic signals replacement;
- First phase of repairs to Ynys Meurig Bridge, Abercynon;
- Park Lane, Trecynon Flood Alleviation Scheme;
- Replacement of Highway Culvert under Bronallt Terrace, Abercwmboi; and
- Flood Alleviation works to the A4059 at Aberdare.

Some schemes have also been delayed for various reasons including third party constraints, lack of contractor resources due to Covid-19, supply chain issues and project complexities being identified. All delayed projects have revised delivery dates.

A [Review of Regulation of Awareness and Enforcement of Flood and Water Legislation](#) was presented and agreed by Cabinet on 21st September that highlighted the need to build further resilience and sustainability into local flood risk management arrangements. Additional dedicated resources for Flood Risk Awareness and Enforcement will now be progressed to work proactively with local communities to manage flood risk.

² Recycling – provisional recycling data

PLACES - Where people are proud to live, work and play

Our community cohesion work continues despite some resource issues due to TTP commitments and recruitment issues in specialised areas. We continue to progress and develop our formal approach to community asset transfer and to ensure that 'social value' is included as part of this process. Through our 'Sustainable Food Network' we now have a good understanding of the priorities in RCT, and will reflect these in the next round of '[Sustainable Food Places](#)' applications, to ensure our residents have access to good quality food, reducing food waste and food poverty.

We continue to work with partners in Bridgend County Borough Council to recommission Tier 1 and 2 substance misuse services so that they align with provision at Merthyr and Rhondda Cynon Taf Councils. Our substance misuse service, [Barod](#), continues to link with housing providers to provide harm reduction services to those that are 'hard to reach'. Mental health and substance misuse nurses are now in post, and trauma counsellors have also been recruited through MIND. This resource seeks to support those with complex needs and provide improved outcomes for people who use the service. We also continue to raise awareness of the harms associated with substance misuse through social media and the promotion of events and support e.g. Distribution of Naloxone posters to pharmacies supported by a social media campaign in a bid to save lives and reduce drug-related-deaths; Promotion of Service User Groups; and A Recovery Walk and International Overdose Awareness Day.

To keep our communities safe, a relaunch of the 'Ask Angela' campaign has commenced in partnership with South Wales Police, which will be promoted through the [Pubwatch Scheme](#). A new Public Spaces Protection Order on intoxicating substances, including alcohol in our town centres, has now been agreed by [Cabinet in September 2021](#).

We continued to invest in our green spaces and increase biodiversity. Our Playground Investment Programme is progressing despite some delays due to play equipment and material shortages. In early August, the [Gravity Family Bike Park](#) at Dare Valley Country Park, officially opened with an outdoor activity offer for all ages.

Our work to establish natural carbon storage solutions continues and we are actively engaging with communities through our [Let's Talk Wildflowers](#) (via '[Lets Talk RCT - Our New Engagement](#)' website). We continue to work with partners such as Natural Resources Wales to support projects like '[Healthy Hillside](#)s' and '[Living Landscapes](#)'.

We continue to access external grant funding where available to improve our park infrastructure and attract tourism to Rhondda Cynon Taf. 'Southern Wales Tourism' have recently filmed a [promotional video](#) at Dare Valley Country Park to promote this Discovery Gateway site, which has been [hosted on their webpage](#). More promotional filming is planned in the future.

The full action plan can be viewed by [clicking here](#)

Investment Priority Progress Update – Quarter 2

| Progress in our Investment Priorities – PLACES | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Investment Area | Investment Value³ £M | Quarter 2 Update |
| Highways Infrastructure Repairs | 7.928 | The additional resources (including the approval of a further £1.5M by full Council on 29 th September 2021) are being used in conjunction with existing resources to deliver a programme of highways infrastructure repairs between 2021/22 and 2023/24. |
| Play Areas | 0.564 | There are 22 schemes which form the planned programme of works for 2021/22. As at 30 th September 2021, 6 had been completed, 3 were under construction, 4 had been designed, costed and scheduled and 9 are to be designed. |
| Skate Parks/Multi Use Games Areas | 0.191 | There are 4 schemes which form the planned programme of works for 2021/22. As at 30 th September 2021, 2 schemes had been completed and 2 are to be designed, costed and scheduled. |
| Structures: Brook Street Footbridge | 1.287 | Brook St. Footbridge – the estimated start date for works is quarter 4 of 2021/22 and discussions are on-going with Transport for Wales in respect of the work to be undertaken. |
| Structures | 5.721 | The investment funding (including the approval of a further £0.5M by full Council on 29 th September 2021) has been allocated to support structure projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Nant Cwm Parc Cantilever and Institute Bridge Strengthening – works are underway on site. •Ynys Meurig Bridge Parapet Replacement – completed August 2021; •Major retaining wall refurbishments – two wall refurbishments completed and others at commissioning and design stage; and •Bodringallt Bridge Infilling – estimated start date January 2022. •Llanharan Railway Footbridge - replacement of the bridge. |
| Parks Structures | 1.597 | The investment funding (including the approval of a further £0.5M by full Council on 29 th September 2021) has been allocated to support various footbridge repairs and replacements within Parks: |

³ Investment Value – relates to LIVE projects / works only that have been allocated additional investment funding.

| Progress in our Investment Priorities – PLACES | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Investment Area | Investment Value³ £M | Quarter 2 Update |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bridge deck and parapet replacement of Maesyfelin Footbridge (Pontyclun) – progressing well and nearing completion; • Replacement of Abercynon Recreation Ground Footbridge - works commenced on-site during quarter 2; and • Various inspections and surveys continue to be undertaken as advance preparation for future schemes. |
| Parks and Green Spaces | 0.996 | This investment funding is supporting drainage, pavilion and infrastructure improvements to various parks sites. The 2021/22 programme currently comprises of 65 schemes; almost half of the schemes have been completed and start dates confirmed for remaining works. |
| Llanharan Bypass | 4.127 | This investment funding (including the approval of a further £2.0M by full Council on 29 th September 2021) is supporting various stages of development, preliminary design, ground investigations and ecology surveys. The project is currently in the pre-Planning Application Consultation (PAC) stage including public exhibitions scheduled for the 12 th and 14 th October. Following PAC and a review of all comments received, a full planning application will be submitted. |
| A4119 Dualling (Stinkpot Hill) | 8.099 | This investment funding (including the approval of a further £2.0M by full Council on 29 th September 2021) is supporting the dualling of the highway between the South Wales Fire Service Headquarters roundabout and Coed Ely roundabout. The tender process to procure a contractor has commenced and work is on-going to secure the land required through the Compulsory Purchase Order process. |
| Community Hubs | 0.458 | This investment funding relates to supporting the Treorchy Community Hub (at Treorchy Library). External works have been completed and the tender process is progressing for internal works. |
| Gelli/Treorchy Link Road | 0.393 | This investment funding relates to investigatory works for a solution which will help alleviate congestion at Stag Square. Feasibility and a WelTAG stage 1 has been completed. The next steps are to develop a preferred option through WelTAG stage 2. |
| Cynon Gateway (North), Aberdare Bypass | 1.899 | This investment funding relates to the preliminary design, planning application and tender preparation for a bypass continuation from A4059 Aberdare to join the A465 Heads Of the Valleys road. |

| Progress in our Investment Priorities – PLACES | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Investment Area | Investment Value³ £M | Quarter 2 Update |
| Bryn Pica Eco Park | 1.400 | This investment funding is to support enabling works, planning and ecology for the development of an Eco Park at the Waste Management Facility. |
| Dinas Community Recycling Centre | 0.250 | This investment funding relates to the provision of a new office building and improvements on the site of Dinas Community Recycling Centre following the demolition of the previous site building. Works have been substantially completed subject to some rendering work being completed. |
| Land Drainage | 0.511 | This investment funding is supporting drainage and culvert network works. The ongoing programme includes works at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cwmbach – works commenced and scheduled for completion in quarter 3; • Property Flood Resistance Programme – on-going engagement with property owners and provision of flood prevention measures e.g. flood gates. • Supporting 9 Welsh Government grant funded schemes across Rhondda Cynon Taf which are scheduled to be completed by March 2022. |
| Porth Interchange Metro + LTF | 1.500 | As set out in the Porth Regeneration Strategy, a new Transport Hub in the Town Centre is currently being developed. During Quarter 2 the project design and procurement of the construction phase has progressed. |
| Total | 36.921 | |

o **PROSPERITY** (Section 5c)

PROSPERITY - Creating the opportunity for people and businesses to - be innovative; be entrepreneurial; and fulfil their potential and prosper

Summary of progress to 30th September 2021

The Council continues to lead on the £15M Transforming Towns grant across the Cardiff City Region and a strong pipeline of potential projects is in development, including review of currently disused sites. A range of property and site redevelopment projects are currently underway in our town centres. In Mountain Ash, the redevelopment of Rhos (Guto) square is currently onsite with construction due to complete by the end of the year and the redevelopment of the Town Hall is currently being delivered with a private sector led approach, with workspace being marketed in advance of project completion in November. In Pontypridd, work continues to redevelop the YMCA building and a bid has been made to the UK Government Levelling Up Fund to redevelop the Muni building into a major cultural hub. A draft placemaking plan is currently being developed for Tonypany, with projects including the redevelopment of Llwynypia Courthouse as a flexible business space, which is now close to completion. The roll out of town centre wifi in Pontypridd is underway, with all equipment installed, testing is underway and 'Go-live' planned for November. The appointment of a contractor for the Porth Transport Hub is imminent, with construction due to commence in January 2022 and a bid to the UK Levelling Up Fund submitted to support the scheme. This will form a key part of the Porth Town centre strategy, transforming the northern entry to the town.

Work to deliver major transport schemes is continuing. The works for dualling the A4119 are currently out to tender, with a bid to the UK Levelling Up Fund submitted to support delivery of the scheme. Pre-application consultation has also commenced for the Llanharran bypass scheme and preparatory work to progress the Cynon Gateway North project is on-going.

With regard to the above references to the UK Levelling Up Fund, the UK Central Government announced on the 27th October the First Round Successful Bids. In the case of Rhondda Cynon Taf, 3 bids were successful amounting to £20.4M for the Muni Arts Centre (Pontypridd), Porth Transport Hub and A4119 Coed-Ely Dualling Scheme, and represents further significant investment to support the Council's on-going programme of economic regeneration across the County Borough.

Working with Cardiff Capital Region, we are progressing Housing viability gap funding to remediate contaminated land conditions across 3 brownfield sites at the former Cwm Coking works, former Aberdare hospital site and Heol y Wenallt, which could deliver over 1,400 new homes. Progress is dependent on funding, with decisions from Cardiff Capital Region expected in quarter 3.

Work continues to develop the visitor economy. The Visit RCT Tourism Strategy was approved by Cabinet on 23 September 2021, and is now the official and adopted strategy that will underpin all tourism related work and efforts, and a Tourism Steering Group involving key stakeholders continues to meet on a quarterly basis. Gravity Bike Park has begun operating at Dare Valley Country Park and discussions are ongoing with Rhondda Tunnel society on the Rhondda Tunnel. Social media content is being shared to support key visitor businesses, with a sustained promotional campaign due to launch next quarter.

A new Education Directorate strategic plan has been co-constructed with headteachers and widespread engagement is now underway with schools, stakeholders and the wider community. In partnership with Central South Consortium, we continue to support all schools, regularly reviewing progress and ensuring effective assessment and tracking systems are in place to

PROSPERITY - Creating the opportunity for people and businesses to - be innovative; be entrepreneurial; and fulfil their potential and prosper

identify and support those learners most adversely affected by Covid-19. A local authority literacy plan has been launched in autumn term and progress will be monitored throughout the academic year. The readiness of schools for the new curriculum is also being discussed by Local Authority and Central South Consortium Officers, and will continue to be monitored. The family engagement officer pilot in secondary schools is continuing, with 13 further posts now being appointed in primary settings.

Support for early years includes the Jabadao physical literacy project with training being provided for registered early years providers. The Early years, childcare and play development partnership has been re-established and provides a forum for sharing information and good practice. The next Childcare sufficiency assessment will take place later in the autumn. Covid-19 continues to impact on the supply of childcare, with several childminders and two other settings closing in the last quarter.

Investment in our school buildings continues, with the revised Band B strategic outline programme submitted to Welsh Government in July. Outline business cases for Penygawsi Primary school, Llaniltud Faerdref Primary school and Pontyclun Primary school have been approved by Welsh Government. Following consultation, proposals for a new Welsh Medium school for YGG Llyn y Forwen have also been approved by Cabinet. On the 4th October 2021 Cabinet received an update in respect of the Council's revised 21st Century Schools Strategic Outline Programme (SOP), this being approved in principle by Welsh Government, with investment increasing significantly from £167M to £252M.

Support for people seeking work continued through our Employment Support programmes, with a mix of face-to-face and online delivery to suit client needs. In work support continues to be offered, with the main requests for increasing hours and upskilling. Links with local employers continue to be strengthened, including through developing relationships with Business Improvement Districts within local towns. However, there is still a delay in information from UK Government regarding future funding for employment support.

Work continued to develop opportunities for our school pupils to gain knowledge of careers and working life, including piloting the Gatsby + project in schools. Filming is underway for 'virtual work experience' video interviews to assist young people who may have had limited opportunity for physical work placements due to the pandemic. A further 28 apprentices and 18 graduates commenced employment with the Council across a wide variety of service areas. Work placements for young people both at the Council and other employers are being provided as part of the Kickstart scheme. We also continue to work with contractors to develop apprenticeship and training opportunities on schemes such as the Porth Transport hub.

Work continues in partnership with Registered Social Landlords and developers to increase the supply of energy efficient housing and commercial developments. Work with Rhondda Housing Association and other partners to construct a zero-carbon home in the Treherbert area is progressing, with design/concept works now complete. Work is currently underway to agree land purchase for the scheme and submit a planning application. Options for the Porth Infants school site continue to be explored with Cynon Taf Housing. The Council also continues to work with local manufacturers and installers to identify opportunities for retrofitting schemes to decarbonise the existing housing stock including consideration of hybrid systems, and maximising existing and new opportunities for external funding. 50 Heat and save applications have been received, with advice and support provided to all applicants, and 17 ECO3Flex grants and 17 RCT heating grants processed.

PROSPERITY - Creating the opportunity for people and businesses to - be innovative; be entrepreneurial; and fulfil their potential and prosper

The full action plan can be viewed by [clicking here](#)

Investment Priority Progress Update – Quarter 2

| Progress in our Investment Priorities – PROSPERITY | | |
|----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Investment Area | Investment Value ⁴ £M | Quarter 2 Update |
| Empty Property Grant | 1.245 | Following the use of Welsh Government Valleys Taskforce Grant funding during 2020/21 to support bringing empty properties back into use, the Council’s funding has been re-introduced for 2021/22. The Council’s funding allocation is now fully committed (and the on-line application process has closed) and it is anticipated that the expenditure will be incurred during 2021/22 and into 2022/23. |
| Schools | 1.006 | This investment funding is supporting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cymmer Primary – demolition of the canteen and erection of fencing was completed in August 2020; • YGG Llyn Y Forwyn Primary (transferring the school to a new building on a new site) - site investigation surveys have been undertaken, land has been purchased and project / cost managers have been appointed to support delivery of the scheme; and • Covid-19 related capital works – site visits and scoping works are underway to install canopies and undertake ventilation works in over 50 schools. |
| Transport Infrastructure | 2.500 | This investment funding is supporting a wider programme of highways capital works including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress design work for pedestrian crossing enhancement projects at Tonyrefail, Groesfaen, Llanharan and Nantgarw (to improve road safety and promote active travel). • A4058 Asda Tonypandy junction - extend entry lane lengths from the north and include cycle facilities to improve junction capacity and traffic flow and promote active travel. The tender process is progressing and works are scheduled to commence in quarter 3. • A4059 / Bowls Club junction - feasibility study ongoing to investigate improving the junction to improve traffic flow along the A4059. |

⁴ Investment Value – relates to LIVE projects / works only that have been allocated additional investment funding.

| Progress in our Investment Priorities – PROSPERITY | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Investment Area | Investment Value⁴ £M | Quarter 2 Update |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A473 Upper Boat - WeITAGs are ongoing and improvements to Maesmawr Lane have been completed. |
| Park and Ride Programme | 0.586 | <p>This investment funding is supporting the development work needed to create additional and formalised ‘park and ride’ car parking spaces with new and improved facilities such as Access for All, improved CCTV coverage and Electric Vehicle charging points at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pontyclun - feasibility design to improve an existing facility is ongoing in partnership with Network Rail and Transport for Wales. Porth – phase 3 preliminary design has been completed and planning permission has been granted. Detailed design will continue for the remainder of this year. |
| Strategic Regeneration Investment | 0.200 | <p>This funding has been approved for the Guto Square development (Mountain Ash) which will provide a bigger and improved area for public use in the heart of the town centre for community events and business uses, and also additional car parking spaces for shoppers and visitors to the town. The construction phase of the project is progressing well and the project is scheduled for completion in the last half of the financial year.</p> |
| Robertstown and Coed Ely ERDF Match Funding | 4.200 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Robertstown – good progress made during Quarter 2 including completion to a number of plots: installation of doors, windows and insulation; internal partition walling; and fire protection. In parallel, electrical and mechanical installation underway and construction of the access road. Coed Ely – the building was handed over on 15th January 2021 and the tenant is now in occupation of the building. Snagging items have been identified and are being addressed. |
| Total | 9.737 | |

Section 6 – ENHANCING THE COUNCIL’S RESPONSE TO EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS

The 18th December 2020 Cabinet meeting agreed a series of recommendations to enhance the Council’s short and long term response to extreme weather events and which limit the impact of flooding on those communities most at risk.

The progress made by Council Services to implement the recommendations can be viewed [here](#) and will be scrutinised by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

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RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

15th NOVEMBER 2021

COUNCIL TAX BASE FOR 2022/23

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE & DIGITAL SERVICES IN DISCUSSION WITH COUNCILLOR M NORRIS

Author: Mr. Matthew Phillips (Head of Service – Revenues & Benefits)
Tel: 01443 680509

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report formally sets the Council Tax Base for the financial year 2022/23.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Cabinet agree:

- 2.1 That in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (Wales) Regulations 1995 as amended, the amount calculated by the Council as its net tax base for the financial year 2022/23, shall be **£77,707.00**.
- 2.2 That for each defined community area of the County Borough, the 2022/23 tax base for Council Tax setting purposes, shall be as set out at Appendix 1.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 It is a statutory requirement to agree and set the Council Tax Base for the forthcoming financial year prior to 31st December each year.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Under the provisions of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Functions and Responsibilities) (Wales) Regulations 2007, as amended, the “calculation and determination of the council tax base” are specified as functions that may be the responsibility of the Executive. Council, on the 7th December 2005, determined that the responsibility for setting the tax base be discharged by the Cabinet.
- 4.2 Under the provisions of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (Wales) Regulations 1995, as amended, the Council is required to determine its Council Tax Base for the following financial year, prior to 31st December each year.

- 4.3 The Council Tax Base is the measure of the relative taxable capacity of different areas within the County Borough and is calculated in accordance with prescribed rules. The Tax Base represents the number of chargeable dwellings in the area expressed as Band D equivalents, taking into account the total number of exemptions, disablement reductions and discounts, with the net Tax Base calculated by taking account of the Council's estimated collection rate.
- 4.4 The gross Council Tax Base calculated for 2022/23 is **£79,904.37**. It is proposed that the collection rate is estimated to be 97.25%. This produces a net Council Tax Base of **£77,707.00**. This means that for every £1 levied in Council Tax next year, a sum of £77,707 will be generated to meet the budget requirement of the Council.
- 4.5 The Council Tax Base is reported to Welsh Government and is used as part of the distribution of the Revenue Support Grant in the Local Government Revenue Settlement. It is also used by the Council when it sets its annual budget i.e. the net annual budget requirement to be funded by taxpayers is divided by the Council Tax Base to produce the amount of Council Tax due for a dwelling in Band D. A set formula is then used to determine the liability for the remaining eight Council Tax Bands (A to C and E to I).
- 4.6 The Council is required to calculate the Tax Base for the County Borough as a whole, in addition to making separate calculations for defined community areas that may have their own Community Council. The Council Tax Base for all parts of the County Borough is set out at Appendix 1.

5. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY

- 5.1 There are no equality and diversity or socio-economic duty implications to report.

6. CONSULTATION

- 6.1 There are no consultation requirements emanating from the recommendations set out in the report. The Council's Revenue Budget (including Council Tax levels) is subject to a separate consultation process.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

- 7.1 The contents of this report are determined by a statutory and regulatory framework. The gross tax base is used as part of the distribution of the Revenue Support Grant within the Local Government Revenue Settlement and the net tax base determines the level and quantum of Council Tax levied and therefore the resources available to the Council. This will be dealt with as part of the Tax Setting and Budget Requirement reports that will be considered by Council in March 2022.
- 7.2 The tax base incorporates the Council's policy with regard to the level of discount for prescribed classes of dwellings, as reviewed and determined by Council on 20th October 2021.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 To fulfil the Council's statutory duty to set the revenue budget and Council Tax for the forthcoming financial year and in line with :-

- The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Functions and Responsibilities) (Wales) Regulations 2007, as amended;
- Local Government Finance Act 1992, Section 33;
- Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (Wales) Regulations 1995, as amended; and
- Council Tax (Prescribed Class of Dwelling) (Wales) Regulations 1998, as amended.

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

9.1 The proposals link to the Council's Corporate Plan 2020 – 2024 "Making a Difference" and the cross-cutting priority of 'Living Within Our Means'.

10. CONCLUSION

10.1 The Council is required to set its Tax Base annually in accordance with regulations as set out in the report.

| 2022/23 Tax Base Analysis | | | |
|---------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Area | | Gross Band D Equivalents (£) | Adjusted Tax Base (assumed collection rate of 97.25%) (£) |
| Non Precepting Communities | | | |
| Rhondda Community Areas | Treherbert | 1,673.61 | 1,627.59 |
| | Treorchy | 2,408.89 | 2,342.64 |
| | Pentre | 1,604.95 | 1,560.81 |
| | Ystrad | 1,720.58 | 1,673.27 |
| | Llwynypia | 638.00 | 620.46 |
| | Cwm Clydach | 805.47 | 783.32 |
| | Tonypandy | 1,129.25 | 1,098.20 |
| | Trealaw | 1,197.58 | 1,164.65 |
| | Penygraig | 1,667.11 | 1,621.27 |
| | Cymmer | 1,779.89 | 1,730.94 |
| | Porth | 1,846.81 | 1,796.02 |
| | Ynyshir | 961.17 | 934.73 |
| | Tylorstown | 1,334.03 | 1,297.34 |
| | Ferndale | 1,245.28 | 1,211.03 |
| | Maerdy | 875.17 | 851.10 |
| | Cynon Valley Community Areas | Penywaun | 790.47 |
| Llwydcoed | | 686.42 | 667.54 |
| Aberdare | | 5,083.14 | 4,943.35 |
| Cwmbach | | 1,810.83 | 1,761.04 |
| Aberaman | | 3,071.44 | 2,986.98 |
| Abercynon | | 1,948.20 | 1,894.62 |
| Mountain Ash | | 2,358.78 | 2,293.91 |
| Penrhiwceiber | | 1,640.58 | 1,595.47 |
| Precepting Communities | | | |
| Cynon Valley Community Areas | Ynysybwl & Coed y Cwm | 1,463.53 | 1,423.28 |
| | Rhigos | 288.14 | 280.22 |
| | Hirwaun | 1,693.11 | 1,646.55 |
| Taff Ely Community Areas | Pontypridd | 10,721.42 | 10,426.58 |
| | Llantwit Fardre | 6,773.64 | 6,587.36 |
| | Taffs Well | 1,457.33 | 1,417.26 |
| | Pontyclun | 3,577.83 | 3,479.44 |
| | Llantrisant | 5,502.83 | 5,351.50 |
| | Tonyrefail | 4,153.92 | 4,039.69 |
| | Gilfach Goch | 1,038.22 | 1,009.67 |
| | Llanharan | 3,315.36 | 3,224.19 |
| | Llanharry | 1,641.39 | 1,596.25 |
| Grand Total | | 79,904.37 | 77,707.00 |



LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

15th NOVEMBER 2021

COUNCIL TAX BASE FOR 2022/23

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND DIGITAL SERVICES IN DISCUSSION
WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER (CLLR NORRIS)**

Item:

Background Papers

Officer to contact: Matthew Phillips

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RHONDDA CYNON TAF

RHONDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

15th NOVEMBER 2021

PUBLIC SERVICES OMBUDSMAN FOR WALES - ANNUAL REPORT AND LETTER 2020–2021

REPORT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER IN DISCUSSIONS WITH CLLR M. WEBBER, DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR COUNCIL BUSINESS

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To advise Cabinet of the publication of the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales' ('PSOW') Annual Report and Annual Letter to this Council for 2020-2021.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 That Cabinet considers and notes the 2020-2021 Public Services Ombudsman for Wales' Annual Report and Annual Letter to this Council.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The PSOW is independent of all government bodies and has legal powers to investigate complaints about public services and independent care providers in Wales. They also investigate complaints that Members of local government bodies have breached their authority's Code of Conduct.

3.2 Following commencement of the Public Services Ombudsman (Wales) Act 2019 the office also has new powers aimed at:

- Providing a seamless mechanism for complaint handling when a patient's NHS care is inextricably linked with private healthcare;
- Allowing the PSOW to undertake own initiative investigations when required in the public interest (e.g. where PSOW suspects potential systemic failures of services or where residents feel unable to complain due to the fact that they are dependent on health/council services or because they are vulnerable);
- Ensuring that complaints data from across Wales may be used to drive improvement in public services for citizens in Wales; and
- Improving access to his office.

- 3.3 The Council has adopted the Model Corporate Concerns and Complaints Policy. This is a two-stage process with Stage 1 complaints being seen as informal. Stage 2 complaints are seen as formal complaints. A complainant is entitled to escalate any matter to the PSOW if they remain unhappy following receipt of a Stage 2 response.

4. ANNUAL REPORT & LETTER 2020-2021

- 4.1 The PSOW has published his Annual Report for 2020-2021 ('AR') pursuant to the Public Services Ombudsman (Wales) Act 2005. The AR has been combined with the annual accounts for the PSOW as it was last year. The purpose of the AR is to report on the performance of the PSOW's office over the year, provide an update on developments and to deliver any key messages arising from their work carried out during the year.

- 4.2 The Executive Summary to the Annual Report is attached at Appendix 1 and the full report accessed via the PSOW website via the following link:

[Annual Report 2020-2021 CYMRAEG](#)

- 4.3 The PSOW also issues an Annual Letter (AL) to each Local Authority in Wales with a summary of complaints received by his office that relate specifically to that Local Authority. The 2020-2021 AL for this Council is attached as Appendix 2 to this report.

- 4.4 The AR sets out the workload that has been dealt with by the PSOW during 2020-2021. It breaks the workload down into the number of enquiries received and the number of complaints received, and also breaks down the complaints into those received about services (public body complaints) and those received in relation to Member Code of Conduct Complaints.

- 4.5 During the reporting period the overall number of complaints about public bodies reduced by 16% to a total of 1874 new complaints, albeit there was an increase in the number of complaints about how complaints were handled by public bodies. The proportion of interventions – cases where they find maladministration or service failure – was the same as last year at 20%. Notably the Ombudsman received a 47% increase in the number of complaints concerning allegations of breaches of the Code of Conduct by Members across Wales (although 35 out of the 167 complaints received concerned 1 County Council Member). 3% of complaints about breaches of the Code of Conduct were referred to Standards Committees or the Adjudication Panel for Wales. In the most serious cases there was an increase in the number of public interest reports issued (8 as against 4 previously – 6 out which related to Health Boards). With regards to new complaints about local authorities the overall number has decreased by 11% compared to the previous year. There was a 22% fall in the number of complaints about Health Boards (seen as a likely consequence and impact of the pandemic on health services). Cwm Taf Morgannwg UHB was the only health board to record an increase in complaints of 8%. There was also a 15% drop in the number of complaints about housing associations follow a 20% increase in the year prior.

- 4.6 The number of complaints about local authorities (including school appeal panels) across Wales was 793 in 2020-2021 compared to 890 in 2019-2020.

- 4.7 Of the 1,874 complaints received about public bodies the top 5 categories related to health (39%), housing (13%), complaint handling (12% against 9% previously), social services (9% against 8% previously), planning and building control (7%). Complaints relating to COVID-19 were categorised into their own category and contributed to 3% of the total number of complaints.
- 4.8 In terms of local authorities specifically the main subjects were: Social Services (21%) Planning and Building Control (16%) Housing (15%) Complaints Handling (14%) and Environment and Environmental Health (8%). 5% of complaints made about local authorities were categorised as COVID-19 related.
- 4.9 During 2020-2021 40 complaints were received by the PSOW relating to this Authority (for periods 2019/20 – 39 and 2018/2019 – 36) which equates to 0.17 complaints per 1000 residents. This represents the fourth lowest total in Wales out of the 22 local authorities and RCT has consistently been in the lowest quartile for complaints received for several years. 0.25 complaints per 1000 residents was the average across the 22 LA's.
- 4.10 The highest number of complaints for this Council, by subject, related to Children's Social Services (20%) followed by Adult Social Services (15%). Five complaints were received relating to complaints handling (as against two in the previous period):

| SUBJECT | COMPLAINTS 18/19 | COMPLAINTS 19/20 | COMPLAINTS 20/21 |
|----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Adult Social Services | 5 | 3 | 6 |
| Benefits Administration | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| Children's Social Services | 9 | 7 | 8 |
| Community Facilities, Recreation and Leisure | 1 | - | 1 |
| Complaints Handling | 4 | 2 | 5 |
| Covid-19 | - | - | 1 |
| Education | 2 | 1 | 2 |
| Environment & Environmental Health | 1 | 9 | 1 |
| Finance and Taxation | 2 | - | 1 |
| Housing | 4 | 5 | 5 |
| Licensing | - | - | 1 |
| Planning and Building Control | 3 | 3 | 4 |
| Roads and Transport | 2 | 4 | 2 |
| Various Other | 1 | 3 | 2 |
| TOTAL | 36 | 39 | 40 |

- 4.11 Of the 43 complaints closed by the PSOW during the period (3 carried over from last reporting period), 16 were closed after initial consideration, 12 were considered to be out of jurisdiction and 11 premature. Those considered to

have been premature related to cases where the complainant had not exhausted the Council's complaints policy. 2 complaints were resolved through the PSOW 'early resolution' process, meaning that the Council agreed to undertake actions to resolve matters without the need for a formal PSOW investigation – see Table C of Appendix 2. 1 investigation was discontinued during the period and the remaining complaint following an investigation was not upheld.

4.12 In total 5% of the Council's cases during the period required PSOW intervention, compared against 12% as reported in the previous period, so a significant drop. The average intervention rate for local authorities was 13%.

4.13 The PSOW also publishes a quarterly casebook which contains the summaries of all reports issued during the quarter, as well as a selection of summaries relating to quick fixes and voluntary settlements. These can be accessed via the following link:

<https://www.ombudsman.wales/case-books/> [CYMRAEG](#)

4.14 Appendix 3 contains the relevant extracts from the Casebooks for the 2020-2021 period that related to this Council.

4.15 There were 8 Code of Conduct complaints made about Members in relation to their role as County Borough Councillors during the period. 6 complaints were found to have no evidence of a breach. 1 complaint was withdrawn and another complaint discontinued after investigation.

4.16 14 complaints were received in relation to Town and Community Councils within RCT as against 26 in the previous reporting period. All save for one, were closed after initial consideration or were discontinued. – see Table F of Appendix 2. One complaint was referred to the Adjudication Panel for Wales with a hearing now listed for early 2022.

4.17 The PSOW also progressed his work as regards Complaints Standards and Own Initiative Investigations during the period. The first Own Initiative Investigation into Local Authority Homelessness Assessments was launched in September 2020 and [the report was recently published on 6th October 2021](#). His report found that despite “beacons of good practice”, too many people at risk of homelessness are victims of “injustice” due to unacceptable delays, inadequate processes, poor communication and placement in unsuitable accommodation. The Ombudsman therefore recommends a new Housing Regulator role be created to assist local authorities in fulfilling their statutory duties consistently.

4.18 A Model Complaints Handling Policy was issued to Local Authorities in September 2020, which has been reviewed and the Council's own complaints handling policy updated where necessary.

4.19 Local Authorities continue to submit data to the PSOW about complaints they handle to the Complaints Standards Authority. Data submitted by Local Authorities in 2020/2021 showed

- Nearly 12,000 complaints were recorded
- Equated to 3.77 for every 1000 residents
- 44% of those complaints were upheld

- 75% were investigated within 20 working days
- 9% of all complaints closed were then referred onto the PSOW for consideration

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

6. CONSULTATION

6.1 The PSOW requests that his Annual Letter to the Council is presented to Cabinet to assist Members in their scrutiny of the Council's performance. The Annual Letter will also be considered by the Governance & Audit Committee as part of its new responsibilities under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, namely to have oversight of the Council's complaints handling processes and procedures.

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no equality and diversity implications arising from this report.

8. FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report however it should be noted that the PSOW has legal powers to require the Council to make payments to complainants where they have suffered financial loss or compensation as a consequence of maladministration.

9. WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS (WALES) ACT

9.1 Learning from complaints, and customer feedback, can contribute to the development of services that meet the needs and expectations of the Council's residents and service users. In this way residents and service users can be involved in improving services and ensuring that they meet long-term needs in a sustainable way. The ability to identify the causes of complaint and service failure presents an opportunity to have a preventative impact – particularly where services manage wellbeing issues.

10. CONCLUSION

10.1 The PSOW has requested that the Annual Letter for this Council be presented to Cabinet for consideration the details of which have been set out in this report.

10.2 Cabinet also receives an Annual Report in respect of complaints, compliments and comments received during the relevant period in respect of both the Statutory Social Services complaints process and those handled through the Council's corporate Customer Feedback Scheme. These reports enable Cabinet to further review and assess how the Council is managing, and learning from, the feedback it receives.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

15th NOVEMBER 2021

REPORT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER IN DISCUSSIONS WITH CLLR M. WEBBER, DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR COUNCIL BUSINESS

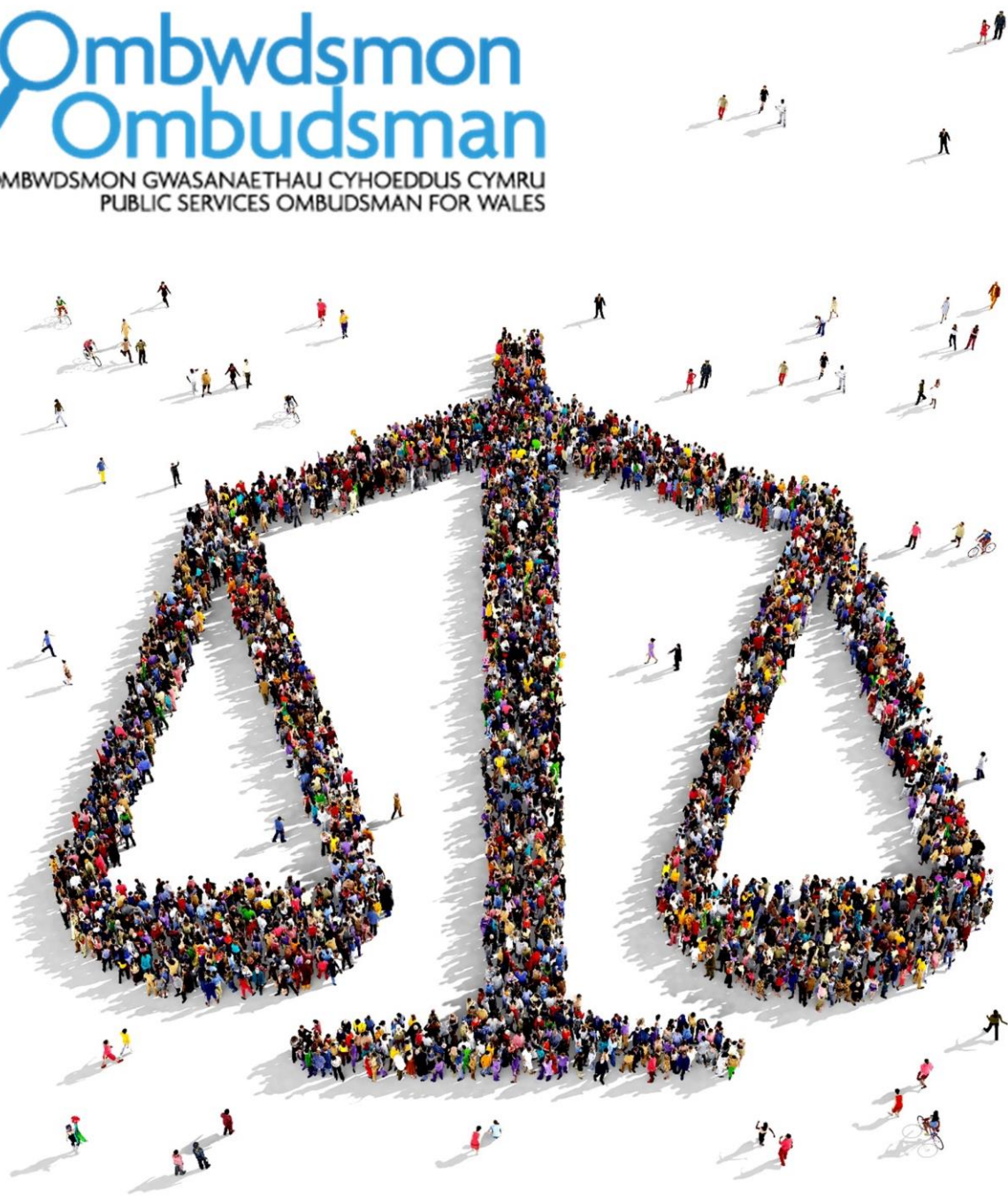
Background Papers:

Public Services Ombudsman For Wales – Annual Report & Accounts 2020-2021

Contact: Andy Wilkins – Director of Legal Services & Monitoring Officer –

Report Consultees:

Jayne Thomas - Customer Feedback, Engagement and Complaints Manager



Delivering Justice

The Public Services Ombudsman for Wales

Annual Report and Accounts

2020/21

Executive Summary

Message from the Ombudsman.

The coronavirus pandemic has presented all public bodies with new challenges, not least the massive challenges to health and care services. My thoughts are with all those servants of the public, the key workers who have not had the option of home working through this crisis.



We have maintained our service throughout, with staff enabled to work remotely. I am very grateful for our teams in facilitating and accepting change so effectively.

We saw the first substantial reduction in cases but in contrast code of conduct complaints about local elected members have increased. We have revised our Code of Conduct Guidance and were involved in training for some town councils about the Code. Complaints standards for local authorities and health boards are now in place, with training being provided to organisations that generate 95% of our complaints.

Despite all the challenges of the past year, I genuinely feel that this annual report reflects well on the office and our people, and I hope that the following year brings greater 'normality' to all our lives.

Nick Bennett

Public Services Ombudsman for Wales



About us

We have three main roles:

- handling complaints about public service providers.
- considering complaints about breaches of the Code of Conduct by elected members.
- driving systemic improvement of public services.

We are independent of all government bodies and the service we provide is free of charge.

Contact us

1 Ffordd yr Hen Gae, Pencoed, CF35 5LJ

0300 790 0203

Page 60

ask@ombudsman.wales

<https://www.ombudsman.wales/>

We have continued to deliver for those who have suffered injustice during the pandemic.



61%

of people contacting us were provided with advice or directed to other sources of help.



3,774 enquiries



2,409 complaints

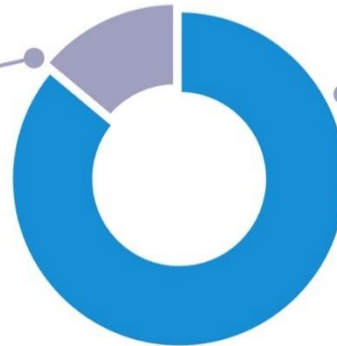
47%

more Code of Conduct complaints compared to last year.

Complaints about

14%

Code of Conduct breaches.



86%

public bodies.

We strive to be a fair independent, inclusive and responsive complaints service. We continued to deliver justice to the people of Wales by handling complaints about maladministration by public bodies and allegations of breaches the Code of Conduct by elected members.

The Covid-19 pandemic had an impact on the number of enquiries and complaints we have received and closed in 2020/21.

14%

We had 14% fewer contacts in 2020/21

16%

We received 16% less complaints about public bodies

21%

We received 21% less complaints about the NHS

11%

We received 11% less complaints about local authorities

12%

We closed 12% fewer cases in 2020/21

New complaints about public bodies

2020/21



2019/20



We developed a constructive dialogue with the public bodies we investigate to understand their position during the pandemic. This was to make sure it would work for everyone and to make sure we were maintaining a service for complainants. This dialogue has continued over the year, and we have adapted as public bodies have too.

| | | | |
|-------------------------------|-----|--|-----|
| Health | 39% | | 41% |
| Housing | 13% | | 15% |
| Complaint handling | 9% | | 9% |
| Social services | 9% | | 8% |
| Planning and building control | 7% | | 7% |
| Covid-19 | 3% | | 0% |
| Other | 20% | | 18% |

Complaints about public bodies closed

1,687

Assessments

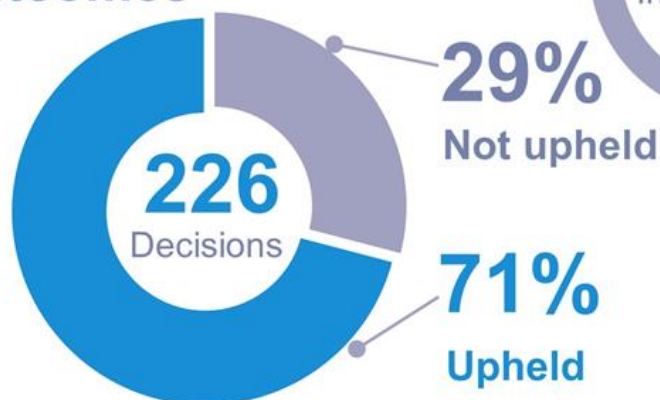
- 212 resolved early with the public body
- 346 out of our jurisdiction
- 658 unable to investigate*
- 471 were made to us prematurely

248

Investigations

Investigation outcomes

- 11 complaints were settled voluntarily.
- 11 investigations were discontinued.



*Reasons 'Unable to investigate': more than 12 months since awareness of hardship or injustice; the complainant has access to alternative legal remedy; there is no evidence of maladministration; unable to achieve the outcome sought; not proportionate; no direct hardship or injustice suffered.

New complaints about Code of Conduct breaches

2020/21



2019/20



Town and Community Council

complaints have increased by 23.7% and County and County Borough Councils complaints by 43.8%. We received 35 complaints about 1 County Council member. Several investigations are ongoing in respect of those complaints.

| | | | |
|------------------------------------------|-----|--|-----|
| Promotion of equality and respect | 55% | | 49% |
| Disclosure and registration of interests | 14% | | 17% |
| Accountability and openness | 4% | | 11% |
| Integrity | 12% | | 10% |
| Duty to uphold the law | 8% | | 7% |
| Selflessness and stewardship | 2% | | 3% |
| Objectivity and propriety | 5% | | 2% |

Closed complaints about Code of Conduct breaches

10 were withdrawn.

255 closed after initial consideration.

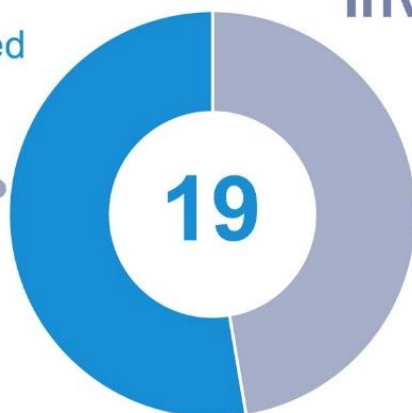


Assessments

5 investigations were discontinued

Investigations

53%
Referred



47%
No action necessary

24

We intervened in (upheld, settled or resolved early) 20% of complaints about public bodies, the same as last year.

We referred 3% of our code of conduct complaints to local standards committee or the Adjudication Panel for Wales, up from 2% in the previous year.

1045

recommendations issued to public bodies.

£62k

of financial redress recommended.

2

special reports issued.

20%

of our recommendations highlighted retraining or process reviews. This can lead to significant improvement in public services.

85%

compliance with recommendations due during the year.

Here is an example from our casework of the types of recommendations we make to help deliver justice:

The Ombudsman found shortcomings in Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board's assessment, investigation and diagnosis of Mr D's brainstem stroke, until it was too late for treatment options to be considered. The investigation found that the loss of the opportunity to have potential treatment options discussed was a significant injustice.


The Ombudsman recommended that the Health Board should:


- Apologise to Mr D and Mrs D.
- Make a financial redress payment of £1,500.
- Share the report with the doctors involved in the interests of improving their clinical practice.
- Develop an action plan to address the failings identified in the report within 3 months


We also continued to share our findings through public interest reports, casebooks, thematic reports and annual letters to the bodies in our jurisdiction.

We issued:


8 public interest and special reports


Health  6

Planning  1

Social care  1

1 thematic report

"At Your Service: A Good Practice Guide" 

We published our second Equality and Human Rights Casebook 

Each year, we send letters on to health boards and local authorities concerning the complaints we have received and considered during. They provide these bodies with information to help them improve both their complaint handling and the services that they provide.



We are proactive, helping the public sector improve during challenging times.

We made large strides in launching our new proactive powers to drive systemic improvement



We issued our Model Complaints Handling Policy and guidance to Local Authorities and Health Boards



We continued the development of standardised data reporting for Public Bodies in Wales.



We provided 90 virtual training sessions to public bodies across Wales



We started four extended own initiative investigations, one of which has been concluded



We re-launched our first own initiative investigation at the Chartered Institute of Housing TAI Cymru conference



We embrace learning and welcome feedback

205 review cases were closed

9%

of the reviews identified we could do more, often as a result of new evidence provided by complainant

32 complaints about us were closed.

22%

of these were upheld or partially upheld.

51% of all complainants questioned were satisfied with our customer service...

...rising to **99%** amongst those satisfied with the outcome of their complaint.



We strive to ensure and promote accessibility, equality and diversity

87% of our customers questioned found it easy to contact us.

3

Sounding boards were run to understand the needs of our stakeholders.



We now comply with most of the Welsh Language Standards



We adopted a Race and Ethnicity at Work Charter



We appointed an Autistic Champion to raise awareness of neurodiverse issues.



We maintained the silver FairPlay Employer level for gender equality.



We pull together and support each other



We provided a range of wellbeing activities to support staff during the pandemic

77%

of staff completed 28 or more hours of continuing professional development.

We saw the average percentage of working days lost through staff sickness drop to

1.1%



We reduced our median Gender Pay Gap from 21% in 2019 to 5% in 2021.



We are accountable and transparent about our performance and use of resources

Our budget of **£5.1m** comprised of...

£4.1m from the Senedd

£974k from a Pension Fund surplus repayment

Our unit cost per case was **£674**

91% of our budgeted funding for new powers (£330k) was spent on implementation



We attended two scrutiny sessions with the Senedd.



We reduced our energy usage by 31%.



We maintained close links with colleagues in the UK, Europe and around the world.



We reduced our office waste by 85%.

182kg of CO₂ emissions were avoided.

Ask for: Communications

 01656 641150

Date: September 2021

 communications@ombudsman.wales

Cllr. Andrew Morgan
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council

By Email only: andrew.morgan2@rctcbc.gov.uk

Annual Letter 2020/21

Dear Councillor Morgan

I am pleased to provide you with the Annual letter (2020/21) for Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council.

This letter discusses information from a year unlike any other in recent memory, and as such may not be useful for establishing trends or patterns. Information received during this remarkable year will, however, bring insights on how public services reacted in the face of unprecedented demand and the most difficult of circumstances.

During the past financial year, we have intervened in (upheld, settled or resolved at an early stage) the same proportion of complaints about public bodies, 20%, compared with 2019/20.

Regarding new complaints received relating to Local Authorities, the overall number decreased by 12.5% compared with last year. This reflects the reduction in complaints being reported by Local Authorities during the Covid-19 pandemic. My office intervened in a similar proportion of the cases closed as in the previous year (13%).

However, we referred a higher proportion of Code of Conduct complaints to a Standards Committee or the Adjudication Panel for Wales: 3.4% compared to 2% in the previous year. This higher referral rate was also accompanied by a sharp increase in the number of Code of Conduct complaints received.

During 2020/21, despite challenges caused by the pandemic, my office made great strides in progressing work related to Complaints Standards and Own Initiative Investigations. The theme and consultation period of the first wider Own

Page 1 of 9

Initiative Investigation – into Local Authority Homelessness Assessments - was launched in September 2020 and the report is due in the coming months. We also commenced 4 extended Own Initiative Investigations, where we extended the scope of our work on a complaint already under investigation.

Last year, my office also pushed ahead with two new publications – ‘Our Findings’ and our first Equality Report.

‘Our Findings’ will be accessed via the PSOW website and replaces the quarterly casebooks. Our Findings will be updated more frequently and will be a more useful tool in sharing the outcomes of investigations. Our first Equality Report highlights the work done to improve equality and diversity, and to ensure that our service is available to people from all parts of society.

Local Authorities in Wales continued to submit data about the complaints they handled to the Complaints Standards Authority (CSA) during 2020/21, as well as receiving a model complaints procedure and accessing 76 virtual training sessions.

The data submitted for 2020/2021 shows:

- Nearly 12,000 complaints were recorded by Local Authorities
- This equates to 3.77 for every 1000 residents.
- Nearly half (44%) of those complaints were upheld.
- About 75% were investigated within 20 working days.
- About 9% of all complaints closed were referred to PSOW.

The CSA will publish data to the PSOW website for the first time in the coming year, marking a key achievement in the progress of this work. Training sessions have been delivered to almost all Local Authorities in Wales, and our offer of training remains open ended and will be delivered free of charge.

A summary of the complaints of maladministration/service failure received relating to your Council is attached.

Also attached is a summary of the Code of Conduct complaints relating to members of the Council and to the Town & Community Councils in your area.

I ask that the Council takes the following actions:

- Present my Annual Letter to the Cabinet to assist members in their scrutiny of the Council’s complaints performance and any actions to be taken as a result.
- Engage with my Complaints Standards work, accessing training for your staff and providing complaints data.
- Inform me of the outcome of the Council’s considerations and proposed actions on the above matters by 15 November.

This correspondence is copied to the Chief Executive of your Council and to your Contact Officer. Finally, a copy of all Annual Letters will be published on my website.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nick Bennett', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Nick Bennett
Ombudsman

cc.Chris Bradshaw, Chief Executive, Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough
Council
By Email only: christopher.d.bradshaw@rctcbc.gov.uk

Factsheet

Appendix A - Complaints Received

| Local Authority | Complaints Received | Received per 1000 residents |
|------------------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council | 15 | 0.21 |
| Bridgend County Borough Council | 31 | 0.21 |
| Caerphilly County Borough Council | 46 | 0.25 |
| Cardiff Council* | 96 | 0.26 |
| Carmarthenshire County Council | 27 | 0.14 |
| Ceredigion County Council | 32 | 0.44 |
| Conwy County Borough Council | 32 | 0.27 |
| Denbighshire County Council | 32 | 0.33 |
| Flintshire County Council | 59 | 0.38 |
| Gwynedd Council | 30 | 0.24 |
| Isle of Anglesey County Council | 18 | 0.26 |
| Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council | 15 | 0.25 |
| Monmouthshire County Council | 20 | 0.21 |
| Neath Port Talbot Council | 19 | 0.13 |
| Newport City Council | 31 | 0.20 |
| Pembrokeshire County Council | 28 | 0.22 |
| Powys County Council | 38 | 0.29 |
| Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council | 40 | 0.17 |
| Swansea Council | 73 | 0.30 |
| Torfaen County Borough Council | 12 | 0.13 |
| Vale of Glamorgan Council | 39 | 0.29 |
| Wrexham County Borough Council | 43 | 0.32 |
| Total | 776 | 0.25 |

* inc 2 Rent Smart Wales

Appendix B - Received by Subject

| Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council | Complaints Received | % Share |
|----------------------------------------------|---------------------|---------|
| Adult Social Services | 6 | 15% |
| Benefits Administration | 1 | 3% |
| Children's Social Services | 8 | 20% |
| Community Facilities, Recreation and Leisure | 1 | 3% |
| Complaints Handling | 5 | 13% |
| Covid19 | 1 | 3% |
| Education | 2 | 5% |
| Environment and Environmental Health | 1 | 3% |
| Finance and Taxation | 1 | 3% |
| Housing | 5 | 13% |
| Licensing | 1 | 3% |
| Planning and Building Control | 4 | 10% |
| Roads and Transport | 2 | 5% |
| Various Other | 2 | 5% |
| Total | 40 | |

Appendix C - Complaint Outcomes
 (* denotes intervention)

| County/County Borough Councils | Out of Jurisdiction | Premature | Other cases closed after initial consideration | Early Resolution/voluntary settlement* | Discontinued | Other Reports- Not Upheld | Other Reports Upheld* | Public Interest Report* | Total |
|------------------------------------------|---------------------|-----------|------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|--------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|-------|
| Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council | 12 | 11 | 16 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 43 |
| % Share | 28% | 26% | 37% | 5% | 2% | 2% | 0% | 0% | |

Appendix D - Cases with PSOW Intervention

| | No. of interventions | No. of closures | % of interventions |
|------------------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council | 1 | 17 | 6% |
| Bridgend County Borough Council | 2 | 30 | 7% |
| Caerphilly County Borough Council | 3 | 45 | 7% |
| Cardiff Council | 26 | 100 | 26% |
| Cardiff Council - Rent Smart Wales | 0 | 2 | 0% |
| Carmarthenshire County Council | 6 | 29 | 21% |
| Ceredigion County Council | 4 | 31 | 13% |
| Conwy County Borough Council | 5 | 31 | 16% |
| Denbighshire County Council | 2 | 31 | 6% |
| Flintshire County Council | 11 | 62 | 18% |
| Gwynedd Council | 5 | 27 | 19% |
| Isle of Anglesey County Council | 1 | 17 | 6% |
| Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council | 0 | 14 | 0% |
| Monmouthshire County Council | 1 | 19 | 5% |
| Neath Port Talbot Council | 1 | 17 | 6% |
| Newport City Council | 5 | 29 | 17% |
| Pembrokeshire County Council | 3 | 26 | 12% |
| Powys County Council | 4 | 47 | 9% |
| Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council | 2 | 43 | 5% |
| Swansea Council | 9 | 67 | 13% |
| Torfaen County Borough Council | 0 | 11 | 0% |
| Vale of Glamorgan Council | 5 | 38 | 13% |
| Wrexham County Borough Council | 6 | 48 | 13% |
| Total | 102 | 781 | 13% |

Appendix E - Code of Conduct Complaints

| County/County Borough Councils | Discontinued | No evidence of breach | No action necessary | Refer to Adjudication Panel | Refer to Standards Committee | Withdrawn | Total |
|------------------------------------------|--------------|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|-----------|-------|
| Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council | 1 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 8 |

Appendix F - Town/Community Council Code of Complaints

| Town/Community Council | Discontinued | No evidence of breach | No action necessary | Refer to Adjudication Panel | Refer to Standards Committee | Withdrawn | Total |
|--------------------------------------------|--------------|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|-----------|-------|
| Llantwit Fardre Community Council | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| Pontypridd Town Council | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Taff's Well and Nantgarw Community Council | 6 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 8 |
| Ynysybwl & Coed-y-cwm Community Council | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |

Information Sheet

Appendix A shows the number of complaints received by PSOW for all Local Authorities in 2020/2021. These complaints are contextualised by the number of people each health board reportedly serves.

Appendix B shows the categorisation of each complaint received, and what proportion of received complaints represents for the Local Authority.

Appendix C shows outcomes of the complaints which PSOW closed for the Local Authority in 2020/2021. This table shows both the volume, and the proportion that each outcome represents for the Local Authority.

Appendix D shows Intervention Rates for all Local Authorities in 2020/2021. An intervention is categorised by either an upheld complaint (either public interest or non-public interest), an early resolution, or a voluntary settlement.

Appendix E shows the outcomes of Code Of Conduct complaints closed by PSOW related to Local Authority in 2020/2021. This table shows both the volume, and the proportion that each outcome represents for the Local Authority.

Appendix F shows the outcomes of Code of Conduct complaints closed by PSOW related to Town and Community Councils in the Local Authority's area. This table shows both the volume, and the proportion that each outcome represents for each Town or Community Council.

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EXTRACTS FROM THE PSOW QUARTERLY CASEBOOKS FOR THE 2020-2021 PERIOD THAT RELATED TO RHONDDA CYNON TAF CBC

EARLY RESOLUTION OR VOLUNTARY SETTLEMENT

Covid - Finance and Taxation

Report issued in October 2020 –

Ms X complained that she had been having financial difficulties for a number of years and had an arrangement with the Council to pay her Council Tax arrears. Her income was further affected by lockdown, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, as she was required to shield. She contacted the Council to discuss her financial situation. The Council placed a Liability Order on her home. The Ombudsman discovered that the Council had investigated Ms X's complaint under Stage 1 of its complaints process but it had not informed her how to escalate her complaint should she be dissatisfied with its outcome. The Council agreed to apologise for this failure and to immediately escalate Ms X's complaint to Stage 2 of its complaint process.

Adult Social Services -Services for older people

Report issued in September 2020 –

Mr A, on behalf of Mrs B, complained about the standard of the recent care and support services being received by Mrs B from Rhondda Cynon Taf County Council ("the Council"). Mr A said that the Council was refusing to engage with Mrs B regarding her concerns. He also complained about the most recent reassessment process. The Ombudsman contacted the Council as he was concerned that the Council's complaints procedure had not been exhausted in relation to the matters complained about. The Council agreed to carry out a formal investigation at Stage 2 of its Social Care Comment and Complaints procedure.

INVESTIGATION – COMPLAINT NOT UPHELD

Adult Social Services - Treatment & Education Drug Services

Report issued in June 2020 -

Mrs X complained about the care given to her late son Mr Y, in relation to a home detox undertaken in February 2016. Treatment and Education Drug Services ("TEDS") (a limited company and registered charity) was commissioned by Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council ("the Council") on behalf of the Cwm Taf Area Planning Board to provide the Primary Care Drug & Alcohol Service ("PCDAS") in its area. Mr Y was referred by his GP to PCDAS in January 2016 for a short-term alcohol problem. He was assessed as suitable for a home detox, which was carried out on 1 February; the detox was considered to have been a success. Sadly, Mr Y was found dead at home on 22 February, and was found to have a cocktail of drugs in his system, seemingly from the black market/street, but no alcohol. The internal investigation

of Mrs X's complaint had identified a number of failings in the process, including a failure to offer Mr Y an inpatient detox. The Ombudsman agreed with these findings. However, he concluded that the detox had been carried out safely, and that therefore Mr Y had not been caused by any of the failings identified. He did not uphold the complaint.



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

15 NOVEMBER 2021

PROGRESS UPDATE ON THE DELIVERY OF REGENERATION IN PONTYPRIDD TOWN CENTRE

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR FOR PROSPERITY AND DEVELOPMENT IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER (COUNCILLOR ROBERT BEVAN)

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to update Members on progress made since September 2017 when Cabinet considered and approved the Strategic Opportunity Areas report and 'Pivotal Pontypridd – Delivering Growth' - the Regeneration Framework for Pontypridd Town centre 2017 – 2022.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended Members:

- 2.1 Note progress made since September 2017 in the development and delivery of projects and investment opportunities within Pontypridd Town Centre.
- 2.2 Note progress made in the development of the Pontypridd Town Centre Placemaking Plan which builds upon the 2017 – 2022 Regeneration Framework. The draft placemaking plan has been developed with Welsh Government and Transport for Wales and provides a bold vision for Pontypridd that is based on a shared ambition for the town and its role within the Capital City Region.
- 2.3 Consider a further report in the new year which seeking approval of the placemaking plan for consultation and public engagement alongside further updates on progress of the Muni Arts Centre redevelopment, the former Bingo Hall site and the former M&S store and associated buildings.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Town centres throughout the UK have faced significant challenges to their economic viability over the past decade and this has intensified further due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Pontypridd town centre is no different, but here, further pressure has been placed on the town and its businesses by the destructive flood events in the winter of 2020.
- 3.2 Despite the challenges faced, Pontypridd town centre has proven to be incredibly resilient, and this report sets out the significant progress that has been made in the delivery of major regeneration projects and initiatives within the town.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The Regeneration Framework for Pontypridd 2017 – 2022 ‘Pivotal Pontypridd – Delivering Growth’ was intended to build on and grow the successful regeneration momentum already established through significant investment in the town centre such as:

- **Pontypridd Town Centre Regeneration Programme** – A major investment of £12m provided by the Council, EU, Welsh Government and private sector finance. Completed in May 2013, the scheme transformed the townscape and supported local businesses to improve their premises and to bring disused buildings back into use.
- **LIDO Pontypridd: The National Lido of Wales** – The ambitious restoration and redevelopment of the historic grade II listed lido was completed in 2015 with £6.3m investment from the Council, EU and Heritage Lottery Fund.
- **Pontypridd Railway Station Improvements** – An investment of £14m led by Railtrack and supported by Welsh Government and the EU resulted in a complete upgrading of the station facilities, improving the station forecourt area leading into the town centre and modernising the rail infrastructure in 2015.
- **Townscape Enhancement Programme** – Delivered with £1.8m investment from Welsh Government and the private sector and completed in 2017, this initiative supported the renovation and refurbishment of 10 commercial properties resulting in high quality, viable and attractive business premises in the town centre.

- **From Vacant to Viable** – Supported by the Council, Welsh Government and Registered Social Landlords, £2.3m investment resulted in the renovation of vacant spaces above retail premises to provide 24 new affordable homes in the previously untapped housing market in the town centre.

5. PROGRESS UPDATE

5.1 To maintain the momentum already evidenced by the significant investment and successful delivery of the schemes in section 4, the Framework sets out a range of projects and investment opportunities that could be developed and delivered over a five year period.

5.2 Four years into the Framework, impressive results have been achieved, evidenced by investment of nearly £115m in the following schemes:

- **Llys Cadwyn** – Completed in October 2020 and funded by the Council and Welsh Government through its 'Building for the Future' initiative, this £51m ambitious and transformational mixed-use development has provided a huge boost to the town centre. After many false dawns and the continued failure of the private sector to develop the site, the development is providing a significant contribution to the growth, vibrancy and sustainability of the town.
- **Llys Cadwyn – Park Bridge** – The Llys Cadwyn development presented a new and exciting opportunity for a pedestrian link bridge spanning from Llys Cadwyn over the River Taf and into the north western corner of Ynysangharad War Memorial Park. With £2m funding provided by the Council and Welsh Government, the bridge, completed in August 2020, significantly improves the connectivity between the town centre and the attractions of the park whilst also improving the use of the River Taf as an asset to the town and its growth potential.
- **Ynysangharad War Memorial Park** – Works have progressed throughout 2021 to deliver a £1.2m package of improvements funded from the Council and Welsh Government via the Valleys Regional Park initiative. Improvements have included a full refurbishment of all the main footways, the installation of upgraded LED streetlighting and a new changing place facility at the Lido.

A further £1.9m has been secured from Welsh Government and the Heritage Lottery Fund for the design and restoration of the sunken garden, bandstand area, rock outcrop area and the provision of a new training/activity centre. Completion is scheduled for early 2023.

- **Pontypridd YMCA** – Funded by the Council, Welsh Government and the Arts Council for Wales, this £4.5 million project is creating a state of the art, multi-purpose facility within a prominent position in the town centre, opposite the Llys Cadwyn development. Scheduled for completion in late 2021, the building has undergone a major redesign to make it fully accessible and to provide new and improved facilities including offices and workspace available for rent to social enterprises and business and a suite of dedicated arts facilities.
- **Muni Arts Centre** – Plans are underway for the refurbishment of this prominent art, music and theatre venue to bring it back into productive use and realise its potential as a key arts and cultural asset in the town centre and wider region. Funded by the Council and Welsh Government, a £500K package of enabling works are currently underway, and nearing completion, with the outcome of a £5.4m funding bid to the Levelling Up Fund expected to be announced shortly.
- **Former Bingo Hall / Angharads Nightclub** – Funded by £2.2m investment from the Council and Welsh Government, these vacant and dilapidated buildings were acquired in March 2020 and subsequently demolished in August 2021 leaving the site development ready. Discussions are taking place with the commercial sector, Welsh Government and advice is being sought from Urban Designers and commercial experts. These redevelopment options are currently being considered with a further report coming forward setting these out in the new year.
- **96-99a and 100-102 Taff Street** – In March 2021, formerly occupied by Marks & Spencer, Dorothy Perkins and Burtons, these vacant buildings were acquired with £390k investment from the Council and Welsh Government. In a prime location in the heart of the commercial core of the town, adjacent to Ynysangharad War Memorial Park and opposite the former bingo hall site, these buildings provide an exciting development opportunity. As above, development options are currently being considered with a further report coming forward setting these out in the new year.
- **Town Centre Property Improvement Programme** – Funded by Welsh Government and the private sector, this initiative is aimed at revitalising vacant or underutilised premises for beneficial business use or for residential purposes within the town centre. Since February 2020, 6 properties have been improved to the value of £855k and subject to availability of further funding from Welsh Government, interest has been received from a further 7 businesses to date.

- **Cwrt yr Orsaf** – Working in partnership with Linc Cymru, construction of this new Extra Care facility was completed earlier this month. The facility will assist older people to live as active and independent lives as possible, with 24/7 on-site support available if needed. Built on the former Pontypridd Magistrates' Court site, this £50m state-of-the-art development includes 60 apartments, dining and lounge areas, a communal kitchen, a hair salon, a car park, communal landscaped gardens and a day care unit.
- **Pretty Ponty** – A sustainable drainage solution has been successfully implemented in the form of a rain garden that tackles the issue of surface water collecting at Mill Street in heavy rainfall. The £55k investment from Welsh Government has funded a solution that will reduce the amount of surface water that ponds and sheds across the pedestrian area, improving the effectiveness of the drainage network and increasing the flooding resilience of the area whilst improving the aesthetics this part of the town.
- **Enterprise Investment Fund** – aimed at supporting sustainable economic growth across Rhondda Cynon Taf by investing in enterprises which contribute to creating a vibrant and strong local economy. The scheme provides financial assistance for Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs) and Start Ups and in Pontypridd town centre, ten businesses have been supported, receiving £57k in grant.
- **Flood Resilience Grant** – in response to the devastating impact of Storm Dennis in February 2020, businesses within the town centre received financial support totalling £24k to implement flood defence measures to improve business resilience in dealing with any such events in the future.
- **COVID Recovery Fund** - The funding from Welsh Government was available to support businesses with external interventions which will facilitate social distancing and a lower density of occupation in places where customers and members of the public will meet, be served food or drink or rest. In Pontypridd town centre, ten businesses received financial support totalling £58k.
- **Restrictions Business Fund NDR and Discretionary Grants** - targeted as businesses directly impacted by the COVID-19 restrictions, the Council distributed £15.29m emergency support to businesses within Pontypridd and there was also £4M of rate relief awarded in respect of Retail, Leisure and Hospitality businesses.

6. PONTYPRIDD PLACEMAKING PLAN

6.1 Section 5 highlights the significant progress made since the Regeneration Framework was reported to Cabinet in September 2017. To maintain that momentum, considerable work has been undertaken in partnership with Welsh Government and Transport for Wales to develop a masterplan for Pontypridd town centre.

6.2 This draft placemaking plan seeks to build upon the foundations of what has already been delivered and provide a framework for delivering further new development and investment that can help improve the prosperity of Pontypridd, enhance the townscape and make it even more resilient to future change. A report setting out the final detail of the placemaking plan will be brought forward in the new year.

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS / SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY

7.1 An Equality Impact Assessment is not required because the contents of the report are for information purposes only.

8. WELSH LANGUAGE IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no Welsh Language implications as the contents of the report are for information purposes only.

9. CONSULTATION / INVOLVEMENT

9.1 There is no requirement for consultation in respect of this report.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

10.1 There are no financial implications as the contents of this report are for information purposes only. The financial resources to deliver these projects and initiatives came from funding provided by external sources such as Welsh Government and from approved RCTCBC budgets.

11. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

11.1 There are no legal implications as the contents of this report are for information purposes only.

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

- 12.1 The regeneration projects and initiatives detailed in the report will collectively boost the local economy and provide job opportunities for local people.
- 12.2 All developments will directly contribute to the goals of the Well Being of Future Generations Act. In particular, the economic and environmental well-being of Wales, supporting the delivery of a prosperous Wales, a more resilient Wales and a Wales of cohesive communities.

13. CONCLUSION

- 13.1 The 2017 – 2022 Regeneration Framework provided a focus for the delivery of an ambitious programme of regeneration projects and initiatives in Pontypridd aimed at delivering real results in terms of job creation, growing and attracting new businesses, providing homes for people and greater connectivity.
- 13.2 The achievements outlined in sections 4 and 5, is testament to what can be achieved in Pontypridd town centre through vision, drive and ambition.
- 13.3 Further evidence of the positive impact of investment to date and proof that Pontypridd is becoming a more resilient town, is demonstrated by the recovery in footfall. The recorded figures for the months July to September 2021 of 805,114 is an increase of 3,161 on the same 3 month period in 2019 which was recorded prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 13.4 With further investment and a coordinated approach between the public, private and third sectors, the scale of the opportunity in Pontypridd can continue to be realised resulting in a dynamic, diverse and sustainable town centre where people want to live, work and visit.

Other Information:-

Relevant Scrutiny Committee
Finance & Performance

Contact Officer
Simon Gale, Director of Prosperity and Development
01443 281114

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

15 NOVEMBER 2021

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR FOR PROSPERITY AND DEVELOPMENT IN
DISCUSSIONS WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER
(COUNCILLOR ROBERT BEVAN)**

Item:

Background Papers

***Contact Officer
Simon Gale, Director of Prosperity and Development
01443 281114***



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

15th NOVEMBER 2021

UPDATE REPORT ON ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING STRATEGY & IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE ESTATES IN DISCUSSION WITH THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CORPORATE SERVICES

Author(s): David Powell, Director of Corporate Estates and Anthony Roberts, Head of Energy & Carbon Reduction.

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide an update to Members in respect of the work undertaken in developing a Council Strategy for Electric Vehicle Charging (EVC) and how it relates to the wider RCT Council Net Zero and Carbon Reduction commitments.
- 1.2 For the Cabinet to consider adoption of the strategy and its formal publication on the website, following consideration of the outcome of the public consultation undertaken.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

- 2.1 Following Members consideration of the feedback obtained from the public consultation in respect of the Electrical Vehicle Charging Strategy, and the feedback obtained from the Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group that Cabinet formally adopts the proposed strategy subject to any suggested amendments and its publication on the Council website.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The contents of this report provide background information, an update on the progress so far and the development of the Council's Strategy and Implementation Plan for Electric Vehicle Charging.

4. BACKGROUND AND UPDATE

- 4.1 In April 2021 the Electric Vehicle Charging and Transportation Working Group was set up, comprising officers from across all Service Groups, under the leadership of the Corporate Estates Energy and Carbon Reduction Team. This group has now held a series of meetings throughout the Spring and Summer.
- 4.2 The initial task of the group is to produce two crucial pieces of work, deemed fundamental to the development of an electric vehicle charging infrastructure within the County Borough.
- 4.3 The first crucial element is the development of a Strategy to cover the future of Electric Vehicle Charging. This lays out the aspirations of the Council and sets the scene for future development of EV Charging that is under our remit.
- 4.4 As previously reported, at the inaugural meeting the group were presented with an overview of the current EV Charging infrastructure across RCT, in order to set a baseline from which to move forward. The document also highlighted potential funding opportunities and underlined research undertaken in the background, all whilst setting the scene for the group's work.
- 4.5 The EVC Strategy has been updated and subject to approval by Cabinet is ready to be published, having progressed through internal consultation with stakeholders and a 2nd public consultation exercise. The internal consultation was conducted via email back in August, however, as with the first consultation process (reported on in June 2021), the external consultation was again conducted using the Council's engagement website, 'Let's Talk RCT' and is attached as Appendix B. The Corporate Policy Team started the consultation on the 6th September and the report data was then extracted following the closing date of 4th October 2021. Remarks, requests and other information were then collated into a report and ultimately submitted to the EVCS team for further consideration. This then allowed a short period for adjustments to be made to the strategy (as appropriate), prior to submitting the final draft back to publishing on 22nd October.
- 4.6 The final version of the published Strategy has also now been sent to the Welsh Language Translation Service.
- 4.7 In a parallel procedure the EVCS team (in consultation with the wider working group) has been engaged in the development of an Implementation Plan.
- 4.8 Whilst the purpose of the Strategy is to inform and set out the Council's aspirations, the Implementation Plan will be to provide clear guidance

and advice on the requirements for the development of electric vehicle charging infrastructure, across the County Borough, including:

- The Council's Fleet
- Other Service Areas
- Community Groups
- Businesses
- The Public

- 4.9 The intention of the 'Plan' is to give a clear road map on how to proceed, who to speak to, and how proposed works will need to be planned and implemented. The Implementation Plan will also contain an 'Action Plan' stating clear goals for the Council, including short, medium and long-term targets for the Council to aspire towards, in the transition to the use of electric vehicles.
- 4.10 Impact assessments have been prepared, in consultation with the Welsh Language Service and Diversity and Inclusion Service, these assessments were then submitted for further comment, before finally being placed before the review panel. The panel was held on 20th October and the outcomes of the consultation have afforded a healthy, positive influence on the whole process.
- 4.11 As reported in June's update, the Cardiff Capital Region's (CCR) City Deal, are undertaking a parallel process to the Transportation & EVC Working Group, for which there are several elements. These relate firstly to EV Taxis and the infrastructure to support them, and then secondly to an infrastructure to support EV Charging for the general public within our car parks.
- 4.12 For information purposes, during the 2020/21 Financial year, 70 taxis were purchased across the CCR, of which RCT have been allocated 5, and we are currently working with the CCR to appoint a management company to operate the vehicles and chargers.
- 4.13 The CCR are already involved in the process of installing taxi charging points across RCT, with the first having already been installed at Porth Park & Ride and Duke Street carpark, Aberdare. There are plans to install further chargers at other car parks. As previously reported, the CCR proposal is that 22kw charging points will be installed, in over 32 sites, mostly within public car parks, but chargers will also eventually be installed at Leisure Centres, such as Hawthorn, Llantrisant and both Rhondda Sports Centres.
- 4.14 Good progress is being made with the development of a draft 'Implementation Plan' ready for internal consultation later in November.

5. ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING STRATEGY

- 5.1 The updated Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy is included as Appendix A.
- 5.2 The Strategy aims to set out why action is needed and identify clear outcomes, along with who will deliver them. This would provide an RCT wide approach and promote and encourage the development of a robust and practical electric vehicle charging (EVC) network in the short, medium, and long term, whilst fostering a transition from petrol and diesel vehicles to electric vehicles (EVs) as part of the Council's wider sustainable transport goals.
- 5.3 The Strategy has ten clear ambitions;
1. Develop an Implementation Plan to roll out an EV Charging infrastructure aligned to future demand with suitable speed and power chargers for all vehicles including cars, taxis, buses, e-motorcycles, e-bicycles, mobility scooters.
 2. Establish the need for EV Infrastructure by working with partners, where applicable, to secure external funding opportunities and help meet demand.
 3. Review our Planning Policies, whilst working with landowners and developers to ensure the EV charge point opportunities are identified and pursued, to promote sustainable methods of transportation.
 4. Monitor air quality, to evaluate the relationship between increased EV uptake and improved air quality, expectantly reducing the harmful effects of air pollutants on public health.
 5. Develop a series of models for funding, deployment, and management.
 6. Identify all suitable locations for potential 'Destination Charging' sites.
 7. Identify suitable locations for 'Workplace Charging' across all RCT sites and work with other sectors, where applicable, to increase workplace charging, to meet demand as appropriate.
 8. Work with residents to raise awareness and establish the best means of charging vehicles where planning, physical and/or technical constraints mean that their preferred method of charging is not feasible or achievable.
 9. Explore potential opportunities for introduction of car clubs within the County Borough.
 10. Transform our fleet towards more sustainable methods of transportation, in a planned and practical way.
- 5.4 The Strategy has recently been considered at the Equality and Diversity Review Panel which also considered Welsh Language implications and all feedback has been taken on board and

incorporated into the latest draft included in Appendix A. The final version is ready to be published as soon as the approval is given.

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS / SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY

- 6.1 A Socio-Economic Impact Assessment has been completed and the main findings are detailed below.
- 6.2 Under the Equality Duty (set out in the Equality Act 2010), local authorities are required to have 'due regard' to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, as well as to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 6.3 In line with the Equality Act 2010, Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council (RCTCBC) is committed to working towards achieving the Well-Being goal of a more equal Wales, as set out by the Well-Being of Future Generations Act, and ensuring equal access to its services and opportunities, no matter background or circumstance.
- 6.4 The EV Charging Strategy will aim to support the alleviation of poverty and deprivation, improve access to employment opportunities, improve access to skills and to develop improved infrastructure and healthier communities, by promoting access to an affordable EV charging infrastructure. The Council will ensure that charging infrastructure will be designed inclusively and will advocate for disability and accessibility equality in the roll out of EV charge points, in line with the Council's Equality and Diversity Policy, and will be fairly-priced to increase both physical and financial accessibility.

7. WELSH LANGUAGE IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Public bodies must work to achieve all seven well-being goals put in place by the WBFGA, with achieving a Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language being one of the seven goals. The Welsh Government's ambition is to see the number of people able to enjoy speaking and using the Welsh language to reach a million by the year 2050, for further information see the Cymraeg 2050 Welsh Language Strategy. The Council intends to support this ambition by providing the conditions to facilitate an increase in the use of the Welsh Language.
- 7.2 Under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011, RCTCBC has a duty to comply with specific standards in respect of the delivery of Welsh language services. To ensure that we meet the requirements of the Measure, we have undertaken a Welsh Language Impact Assessment to assess the likely (or actual) effects of the Electric

Vehicle Charging Strategy (EVCS) on the Welsh language, both within our workforce and in the community, so that we can mitigate any negative impacts and enhance the positive impacts.

- 7.3 In line with the Council's Welsh Language Promotional Strategy, the EVCS will ensure that bilingual Welsh first signage and Welsh language services are available on the charging devices installed by the Council, or its Contractors, throughout the County Borough. The Council will also use its influence to encourage other Charge Point providers to implement the same measures to support the Welsh Language.

8. CONSULTATION / INVOLVEMENT

- 8.1 During the development of the EV Charging Strategy, two consultation exercises were conducted involving the public. There are no further consultation requirements at present with regards to this report.
- 8.2 The findings of the Public Consultation exercise can be found in Appendix B of the report and have been taken into consideration in drafting of the revised Strategy.
- 8.3 On the 10th November, Members of the [Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group](#) will consider the revised strategy, and the comments of the group will be provided in advance of the meeting to the Cabinet to assist in Cabinet's deliberations by the Service Director, Democratic Services & Communications.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

- 9.1 Whilst there are no financial implications with regards to this update report, it is worth noting that the schemes currently underway as a result of the Cardiff City Region (CCR) initiatives are fully funded by the CCR.
- 9.2 As the Implementation Plan and detailed action plans are developed, additional funding may be required to deliver new workstreams moving forwards and all external funding opportunities will continue to be investigated as we move forward.

10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 10.1 There are no legal implications aligned to this report

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

- 11.1 The future actions that arise as a result of the future recommendations of the report will be considered by the Council's Cabinet and it will take full regard to the seven national wellbeing goals.

12. CONCLUSION

- 12.1 This report provides an update to the Members with regards to the work underway on developing a Council Strategy for Electrical Vehicle Charging and how it relates to the wider RCT Council Net Zero and Carbon Reduction commitments.

Appendix A

Final Proof of the Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy

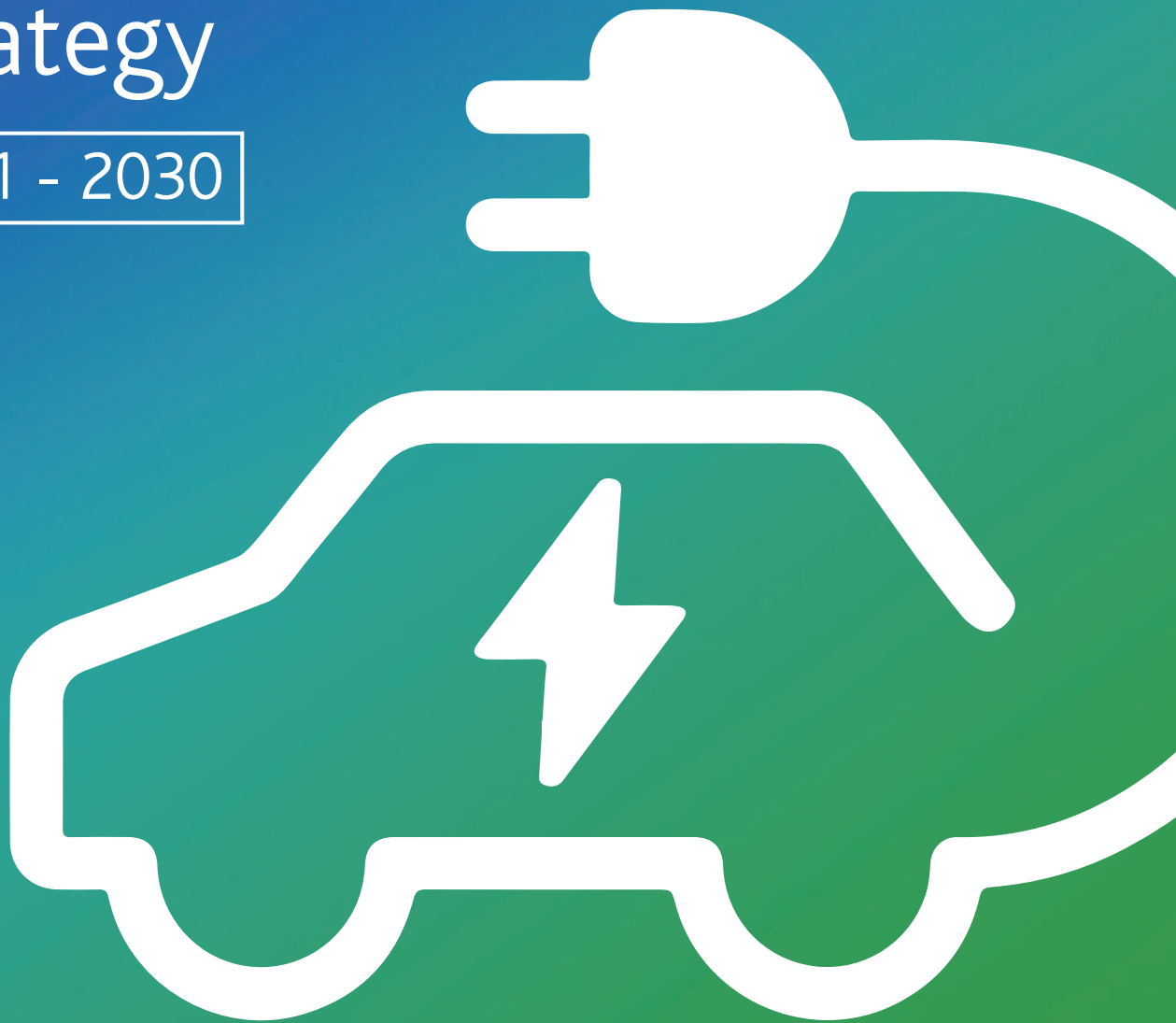
Appendix B

Consultation Feedback Report

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council

Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy

2021 - 2030



Rhondda Cynon Taf
Hinsawdd Ystyriol
Think Climate
Rhondda Cynon Taf



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NOTE:

TEXT TO BE UPDATED AT THE END WHEN DOCUMENT IS SIGNED OFF DUE TO CHANGES COULD HAVE KNOCK ON EFFECTS TO PAGES AND FORMATTING.

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Foreword

The “Climate Emergency” means that meeting the Welsh Government target of net zero carbon emissions by 2030 is a priority for our nation and all our citizens.

At a UK level, the phasing out of new petrol and diesel cars/vans by 2030 and all carbon emissions from new vehicles at the tailpipe from 2035, means that Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council has a duty to ensure that the aspirations of residents and businesses in the area are extensively supported in their drive towards the use of Ultra Low Emission Transportation, and particularly in the use of electric vehicles.

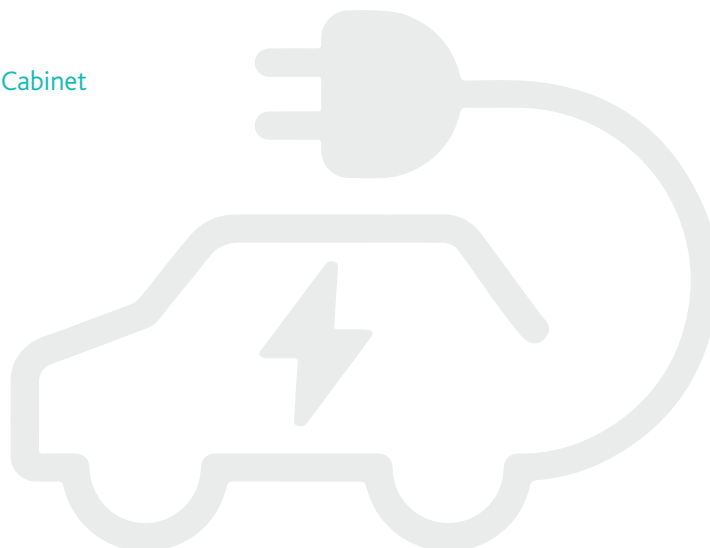
As a Council we recognise that the transition to electric vehicles will help to reduce the level of airborne pollutants at the roadside, improving the environment in areas where we all live, work and play.

The Council has an important role to play in supporting growth in electric vehicles, including the creation of a supportive policy environment, by abetting the installation of new charging facilities for electric vehicles, and promoting their benefits to a wider audience.

Rhondda Cynon Taf will lead by example by introducing a strategy that will help deliver an electric vehicle charging infrastructure across the County Borough over the next 10 years and we will also ensure that the Council’s own activities use cleaner technology at the earliest opportunity, where it is practical to do so.

Councillor Andrew Morgan

Leader of the Council and Chair of the Cabinet





Executive Summary



Rhondda Cynon Taf has invested substantially in reducing the carbon emissions of our existing property portfolio and in restricting carbon emissions in all new build projects, both in the procurement process and in operational mode.

However, with a “Climate Emergency” having now been declared by the Welsh Government, the time has now arrived to take our efforts to the next level, and the Council’s openly declared, yet ambitious, net zero carbon aspirations looking towards the year 2030, are a clear indication that the decision to ‘move up a gear’ has already been taken.

The Council recognises that the promotion of a robust and practical electric vehicle charging (EVC) network within the area is essential to realising not just our own ambitions, but also those of the wider public residing within our boundaries and the extensive business community therein.

Ownership of electric vehicles (EVs) has grown steadily in recent years and is expected to grow more significantly as technology improves and consequently the affordability of such vehicles grows. The inevitable transition from petrol and diesel vehicles to EVs will dramatically reduce exhaust emissions and will be advantageous in our undertaking to improve air quality and to reduce the harmful effects of air pollutants on public health.

The wider EV transformation has the potential to stimulate growth in both the local and wider economy by providing openings for new markets and innovation, and a properly planned charging infrastructure will be essential in helping to realise the full potential of such opportunities.

However, we do recognise that there are barriers to the convenient use of electric vehicles, both existing and potential, and that the current absence of a comprehensive charging network means that people have a lack of confidence in how far they can travel using EVs. Whilst recognising that there is an opportunity for a proportion of EV charging to be done overnight at home, we also understand that not all households have access to off-street parking, which is the foremost problem in a substantial part of our geographical area.

The Council also recognises that ownership of an electric vehicle may not be attainable, or even desirable, for everyone, which creates challenges around how those who rely on other means of transport might benefit from the technology. For example, public transport such as buses and taxis, modes of transport that will also need to be fully supported by the future EVC infrastructure.



Constantly advancing technology in recent years has seen the development of a number of alternatively fuelled vehicles designed to run on hydrogen, compressed natural gas and other such innovations. At present this EVC Strategy focuses purely on plug-in EV's. This reflects the increase in EV ownership within the area, however the Council recognises that over time it may be necessary to address the plausible challenge of other fuel types and technologies, and we will continue to observe developments with a keen interest.

This EVC Strategy will outline several key principles that will empower the Council to advise, help and support individuals, or parties, that wish to make the switch from conventional vehicles to EVs. The Council intends to encourage EV uptake amongst residents, including those without access to off-street parking.

It is the intention, through this EVC Strategy and the subsequent Implementation Plan, to provide a source of information to help coordinate and integrate an approach across the County Borough and to lay the foundations to ensure that the Council, or associated groups, are able to apply for funding to support a publicly accessible charging network, when such opportunities become available.

Through careful and considered planning guidance, the Council intends to encourage developers to build EV charging into new developments, stimulate the expansion of a safe and sustainable on-street charging infrastructure and facilitate the provision of public charge points on council land, whilst working with collaborative groups/bodies to support and encourage further provision.

In addition to private vehicles, the strategy will also support EV uptake among car clubs, taxis, buses, community transport operators, as well as within our own fleet of council vehicles, wherever practicable.

The Council's aspiration is for this EVC Strategy to complement the evolution of EV charging provision in the private sector and for the complementary 'Implementation Plan' to assist in helping to fill any foreseeable gaps in existing and future network provision.

The overall aim of both documents, this EVC Strategy and the supporting EVC Implementation Plan, will be to provide surety to existing EV users and to encourage the uptake of electric vehicles amongst potential new users, thus ultimately benefiting air quality as part of the Council's wider sustainable transport approach.





Purpose and Aim of this Strategy



The purpose of this Strategy is to pull together into one document all of the work that is taking place at a national, regional, and local level in respect of delivering an ambitious infrastructure for charging electric vehicles for Rhondda Cynon Taf.

The Strategy aims to set out why action is needed and identify clear outcomes, along with who will deliver them, to coordinate a Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough wide approach, to promote and encourage the development of a robust and practical electric vehicle charging (EVC) network in the short, medium, and long term, whilst fostering a transition from petrol and diesel vehicles to electric vehicles (EVs) as part of the Council's wider sustainable transport goals.

Implementation of this Strategy

The Council will follow up the publication of this overarching EVC Strategy with an Implementation Plan.

The purpose of the Plan will be to inform all readers of the Strategy on how to proceed with any aspirations or intentions that they may have regarding the development and installation of EVC infrastructure works.

The Strategy broadly informs whilst setting out clear ambitions, however the Implementation Plan will provide clear guidance to inform all parties on the requirements for the development of electric vehicle charging infrastructure across the County Borough, including:

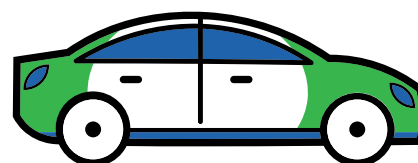
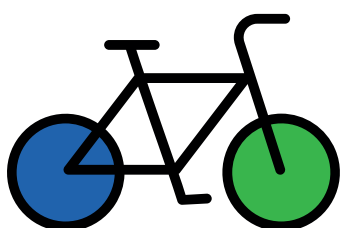
- The Council's Fleet
- Community Groups
- Businesses
- The Public

The Plan will provide advice on which route to take in given circumstances and will act as a "road map" to inform everyone, and to ensure that individuals and/or organisations know who they need to consult with, when and how.

The Plan will also provide practical guidance to advise on best practice and signpost individuals and organisations towards the necessary and relevant legislation, any known sources of funding and any other relevant information that is available such as estimated price ranges for different charging devices.

Our Ambitions

- 1** Develop an Implementation Plan to roll out an EV Charging infrastructure aligned to future demand with suitable speed and power chargers for all vehicles including cars, taxis, buses, e-motorcycles, e-bicycles, mobility scooters.
- 2** Establish the need for EV Infrastructure by working with partners, where applicable, to secure external funding opportunities and help meet demand.
- 3** Review our Planning Policies, whilst working with landowners and developers to ensure the EV charge point opportunities are identified and pursued, to promote sustainable methods of transportation.
- 4** Monitor air quality, to evaluate the relationship between increased EV uptake and improved air quality, expectantly reducing the harmful effects of air pollutants on public health.
- 5** Develop a series of models for funding, deployment, and management.
- 6** Identify all suitable locations for potential 'Destination Charging' sites.
- 7** Identify suitable locations for 'Workplace Charging' across all RCT sites and work with other sectors, where applicable, to increase workplace charging, to meet demand as appropriate.
- 8** Work with residents to raise awareness and establish the best means of charging vehicles where planning, physical and/or technical constraints mean that their preferred method of charging is not feasible or achievable.
- 9** Explore potential opportunities for introduction of car clubs within the County Borough.
- 10** Transform our fleet towards more sustainable methods of transportation, in a planned and practical way.





Introduction




Overview of Policy Environment


Climate Change Policy

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council (RCTCBC) has recognised a need to act on the Climate Change crisis and has committed to becoming a Net Zero Local Authority by the target date of 2030, and in doing so, contribute to the Welsh Government goal of all Public Sector organizations becoming Net Zero by 2050. RCTCBC has recognised that fundamental changes are needed and in 2019, the Council established a Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group. This sub-committee of the Council’s Cabinet is charged with developing the Council’s response to the Climate Change Agenda, to inform the development of the Council’s Climate Change Strategy and ultimately support Cabinet in achieving RCTCBC’s Net Zero goal of 2030.



Transport Policy


In January 2020, RCTCBC published  **Transportation - How do we Reduce our Carbon Emissions**, which identified that the transport sector accounts for 14% of Wales’ carbon emissions and has a considerable role to play in addressing the climate emergency.

The Welsh Government’s  **Prosperity for All: A Low Carbon Wales** published March 2019, identifies how Wales aims to meet emission reduction targets and covers proposals to address the increase in electric vehicle use and subsequent roll out of required charging infrastructure. The report establishes Wales’ commitment to:



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.



In March 2021, Welsh Government consulted on a new  **Wales Transport Strategy**, which sets out a long-term vision for the decarbonisation of transport systems, with the stated ambition of the development of a transport system that responds to the climate emergency. Encompassed within this strategy is the facilitation of ultra-low emission vehicles (ULEVs) that benefit the economy, environment, social justice, health and well-being.

Sustainable Transport Hierarchy

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council supports the principles of the Welsh Government's Sustainable Transport Hierarchy in relation to new development, see figure 1. The hierarchy prioritises walking, cycling and public transport ahead of private motor vehicles.

In tackling Climate Change, the Council recognises the necessity of reducing the need to travel, prevent car-dependent developments in unsustainable locations, and welcomes the delivery of schemes located, designed, and supported by infrastructure, which prioritises access and movement by active and sustainable transport. The hierarchy recognises that Ultra Low Emission Vehicles such as electric vehicles have an important role to play in the decarbonisation of transport, particularly in rural areas with limited public transport services.

Although the focus of this strategy is to promote and encourage the development of a robust electrical vehicle charging network (in the short, medium, and long term) it will give consideration to the sustainable transport hierarchy by detailing information relevant to cycling, car clubs, buses and taxis, see section titled "Other Electric Vehicles". For further information relating to [Public Transport](#) and [Active Travel and Cycling](#) in RCTCBC such as the Integrated Network Map for the Rhondda Cynon Taf area please visit the [Travel](#) section of the RCTCBC website.

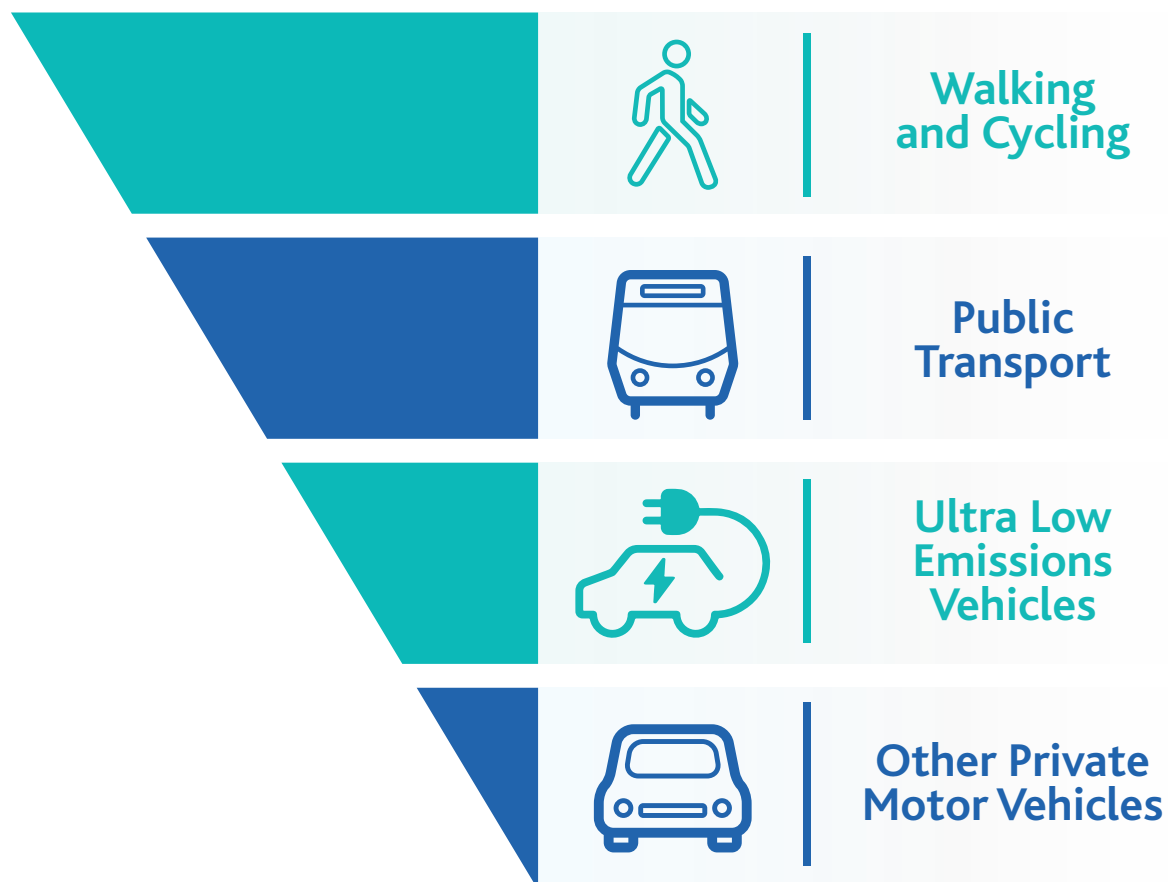


Figure 1: The Sustainable Transport Hierarchy for Planning as detailed in Planning Policy Wales Edition 11.

Air Quality Policy

Air quality management areas (AQMA) must be declared if the air quality does not meet relevant standards and an Action Plan is prepared to address and improve this. There are currently 16 identified AQMAs across Rhondda Cynon Taf, for breaches of Air Quality Objectives for Nitrogen Dioxide see figure 2.

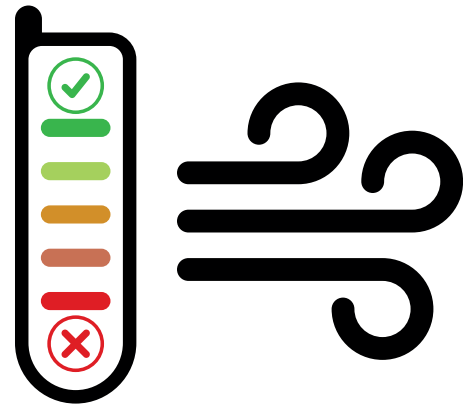

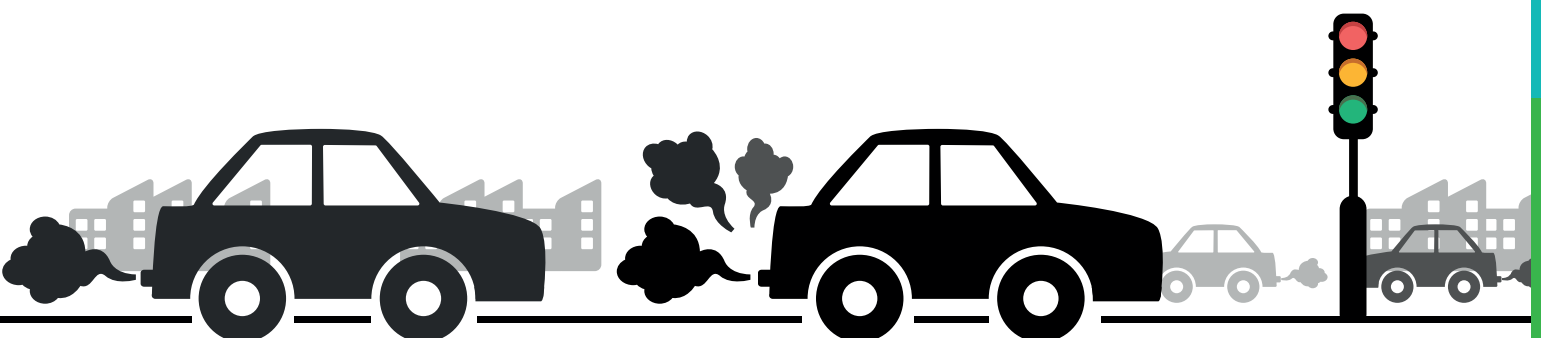


Figure 2: The 16 identified Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) across Rhondda Cynon Taf.

Road transport has been identified as a major source of the two most relevant air pollutants to the public: Nitrogen Dioxide and Particulate Matter. As such, lowering the emissions of road transport can have a positive impact on air quality, and in return, public health. In Autumn 2021, the Council are due to publish their  **Annual Report**, providing information regarding statutory processes, up-to-date local monitoring data and the analysis of local air quality.

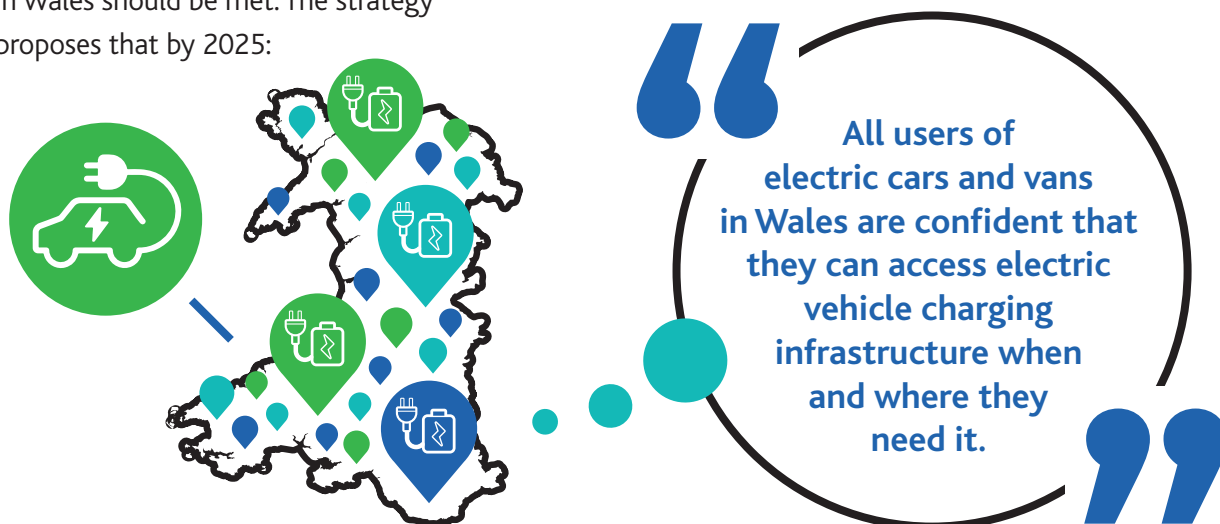


Electric Vehicle Policy

In November 2020, the UK Government announced the phase-out of new petrol and diesel cars and vans from 2030. Furthermore, in December 2020, the Climate Change Committee published [🌍 The Path to a Net Zero Wales](#), which recommended a set of targets with the aim of becoming a Net Zero Wales by 2050. The report addressed the requirement for an increased roll out of low carbon solutions for new vehicles by 2030 and Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGV) by 2050.

In June 2021, the Welsh Government published its [🌍 Programme for Government](#), which proposes to build a stronger, greener economy as progress is made towards decarbonisation. Part of this objective includes a commitment to achieve 45% of all travel by sustainable modes by 2040 and promises to progress work to achieve zero- emissions bus and taxi vehicle fleets by 2028.

In addition, the Welsh Government has also published the [🌍 Electric Vehicle \(EV\) Charging Strategy for Wales](#). The strategy, shaped by the [🌍 Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#), provides a framework for the consideration of how electric vehicle charging infrastructure needs in Wales should be met. The strategy proposes that by 2025:



The Welsh Government strategy aims to provide a common framework for Local Authority understanding and collaboration, and proposes an investment of £30 million over the next 5 years to deliver the aims set out within the strategy. An [🌍 Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy for Wales: Action Plan](#) was published in October 2021 to detail how the Welsh Government intend to deliver the strategy. The actions set out in the Action Plan will be developed and implemented up to 2030 in line with the time frame of the strategy. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) will be used to monitor delivery which will be reviewed annually to help track progress towards better charger infrastructure.

RCTCBC's Climate Change Strategy recognises that an electrification of vehicles is needed to address decarbonisation of the Council's transport sector. In March 2021, an [🌍 Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure: Driving Change](#) report was presented to the Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group. The report outlined that if growth in ULEV ownership continues in alignment with UK trends, then forecasts indicate that there could be more than 900 ULEVs in RCT by the early 2020s, and over 8,000 by 2030.

As such, an extensive scale up of Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Infrastructure across the County Borough is needed in order to meet public demand and accelerate Council-wide decarbonisation. In order to address this growth in demand and provide guidance to the rollout of a charging network across the County Borough, the report recommended the development of an EV Charging Strategy and Implementation Plan to sit alongside a Transport Strategy and future Planning Policies.

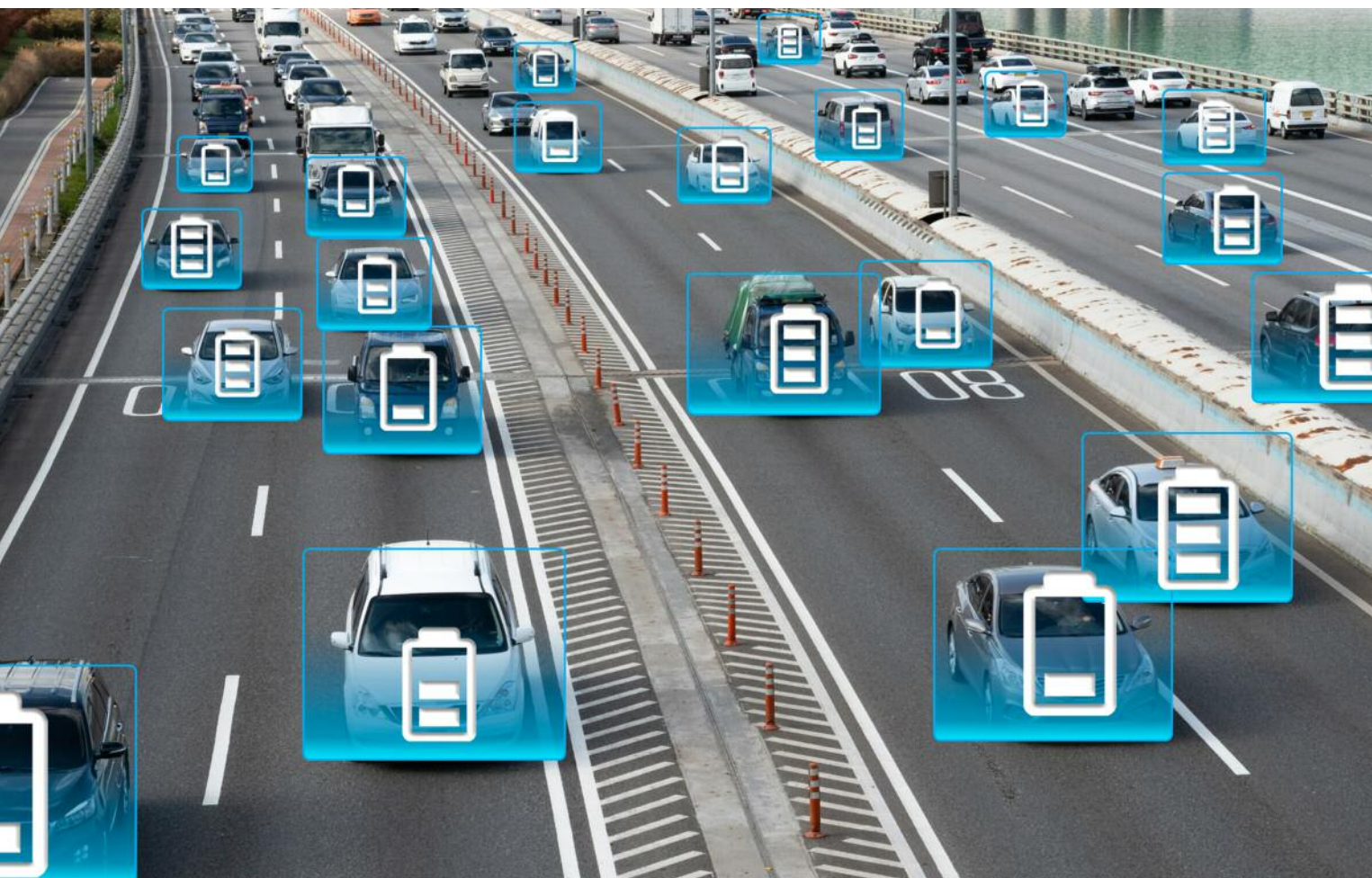
Existing Provision

The latest Department for Transport figures indicate that the number of registered ULEVs across Rhondda Cynon Taf is on the rise. Table 1 below illustrates how ULEV ownership has more than doubled between 2018 and 2020, with 153 registered at the end of Quarter 4 in 2018 rising to 363 vehicles registered at the end of Quarter 1 in 2021.

Table 1: Number of Ultra Low Emission Vehicles (ULEV), Battery Electric Vehicles (BEV) and Plug-In Hybrid Electric Vehicles (PHEV) licensed at the end of quarter 4 for 2018, 2019 and 2020, and Q1 2021. (Source: [Department for Transport](#)).

| | | 2018 Q4 | 2019 Q4 | 2020 Q4 | 2021 Q1 |
|-------------|-------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| ULEV | Rhondda Cynon Taf | 153 | 201 | 329 | 363 |
| | Wales | 3,951 | 5,315 | 8,163 | 9,349 |
| | United Kingdom | 198,258 | 269,376 | 431,639 | 488,078 |
| BEV | Rhondda Cynon Taf | 89 | 113 | 184 | 209 |
| | Wales | 1,827 | 2,696 | 4,641 | 5,389 |
| | United Kingdom | 67,075 | 105,960 | 216,379 | 249,932 |
| PHEV | Rhondda Cynon Taf | 56 | 83 | 139 | 148 |
| | Wales | 1,840 | 2,295 | 3,197 | 3,614 |
| | United Kingdom | 112,967 | 142,788 | 194,194 | 216,740 |

Note: The figures referred to in the table above include for all registered vehicles – both private and business.



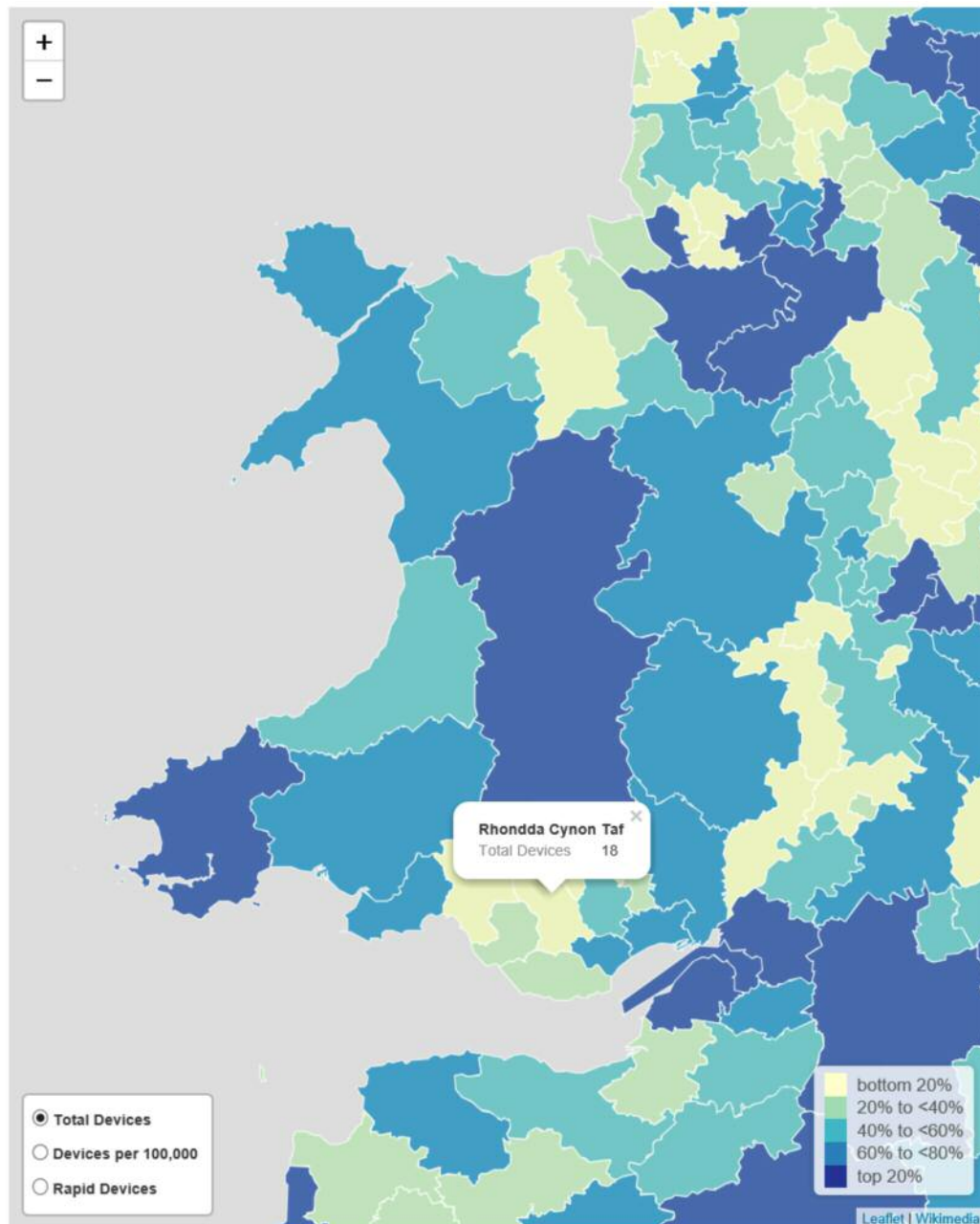


Figure 3: The total number of public electric vehicle charging devices in Wales. 'Total devices' represent publicly available charging devices at all speeds. (Source: [Department for Transport](#)).

As of October 2021, there are currently a total of 18 publicly available EV charging devices (of all speeds) located in Rhondda Cynon Taf, which equates to 7.4 charging devices per 100,000 population. Furthermore, as of October 2021, there was 1 rapid charging device in RCT, but in comparison, there was a total of 994 publicly available EV charging devices (of all speeds) in Wales, of which 160 are rapid chargers. Figure 3 illustrates that RCT is currently placed in the bottom 20% for total charging devices in Wales. Further information is available in Appendix II

RCTCBC will be undertaking a mapping exercise, as part of the EV Charging Implementation Plan, to identify potential future EV charge points that RCTCBC will be considering across the County Borough. Further information is available in Appendix III.



Expected Demand

Demand across the UK is predicted to rise rapidly with one million ULEVs projected by the early 2020s and as many as nine million by 2030. Based on this, and assuming the trend for ULEV ownership in Rhondda Cynon Taf continues in alignment with the UK generally, there could be over 900 ULEVs registered in Rhondda Cynon Taf by the early 2020s and over 8,000 by 2030. As ownership figures continue to rise, Rhondda Cynon Taf will see a corresponding demand for charging points.

Based on quantitative modelling of rising demand in ULEV ownership across Wales, the Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy for Wales provides a demand forecast for the number of charge points required by 2030, as shown in figure 4.

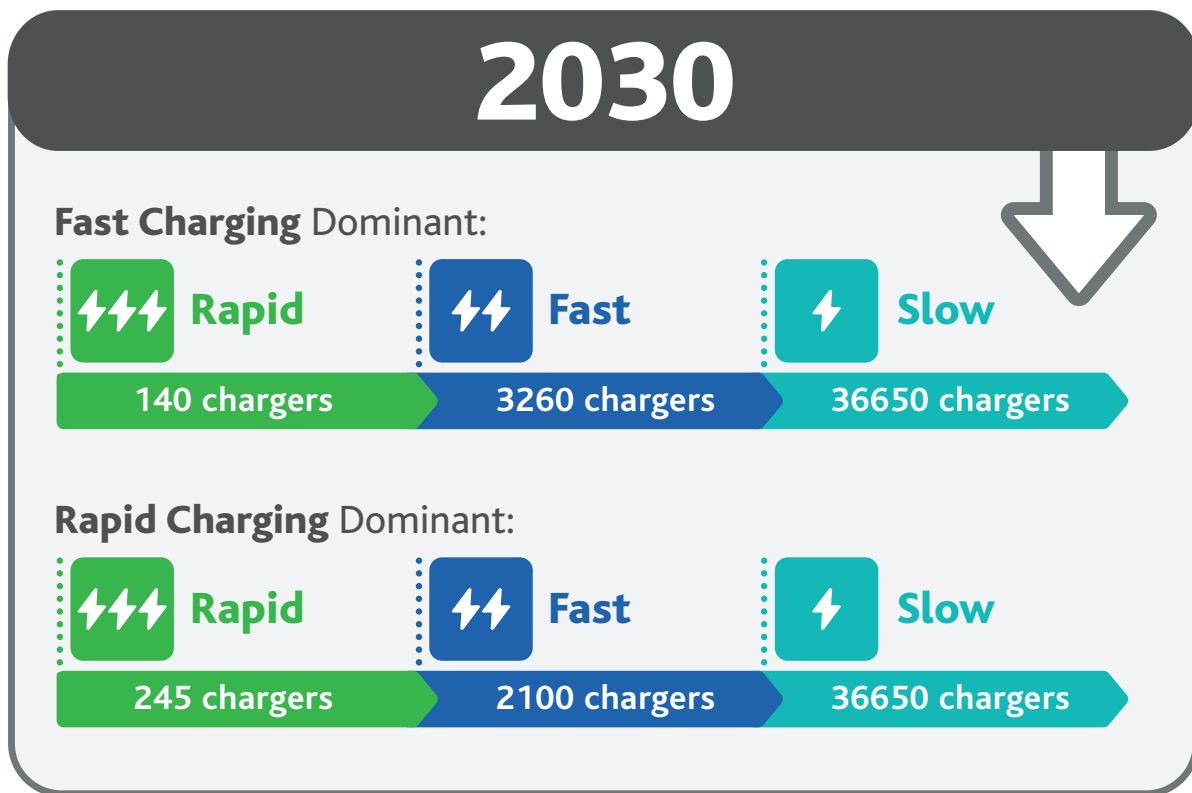


Figure 4: The forecast number of Rapid Fast and Slow chargers required by 2030 in Rhondda Cynon Taf, based on both a fast charger dominant structure and a rapid charger dominant structure. (Source: [Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy for Wales](#))

Forecasts indicate that by the year 2030, Rhondda Cynon Taf will have a predicted requirement of 40,050 chargers based on a fast charging dominant structure, see figure 4. This figure lowers to a predicted requirement of 38,995 chargers based on a rapid charging dominant structure. The predicted need for charging across Rhondda Cynon Taf provides an indication of the growing scale of demand.

Public Consultation

Whilst the use of electric vehicles is increasing year on year, an assessment of the future demand for EV charging infrastructure is paramount in supporting this growth. As such, an online public consultation, called Let's Talk EV Charging, was undertaken by RCTCBC to obtain the views of potential EV users to help gauge potential take-up, both now and in the future, in order to advise on the suitability of locations and type of charge points to consider.

The consultation was launched in mid- April and the report data was extracted at the end of May 2021. In total, 325 online survey responses were received, together with 122 poll responses and 222 locations were identified as potential electric car charging points within RCT. Figure 5 provides a summary of the

 **Let's Talk EV Charging - Final Report June 2021** consultation report:

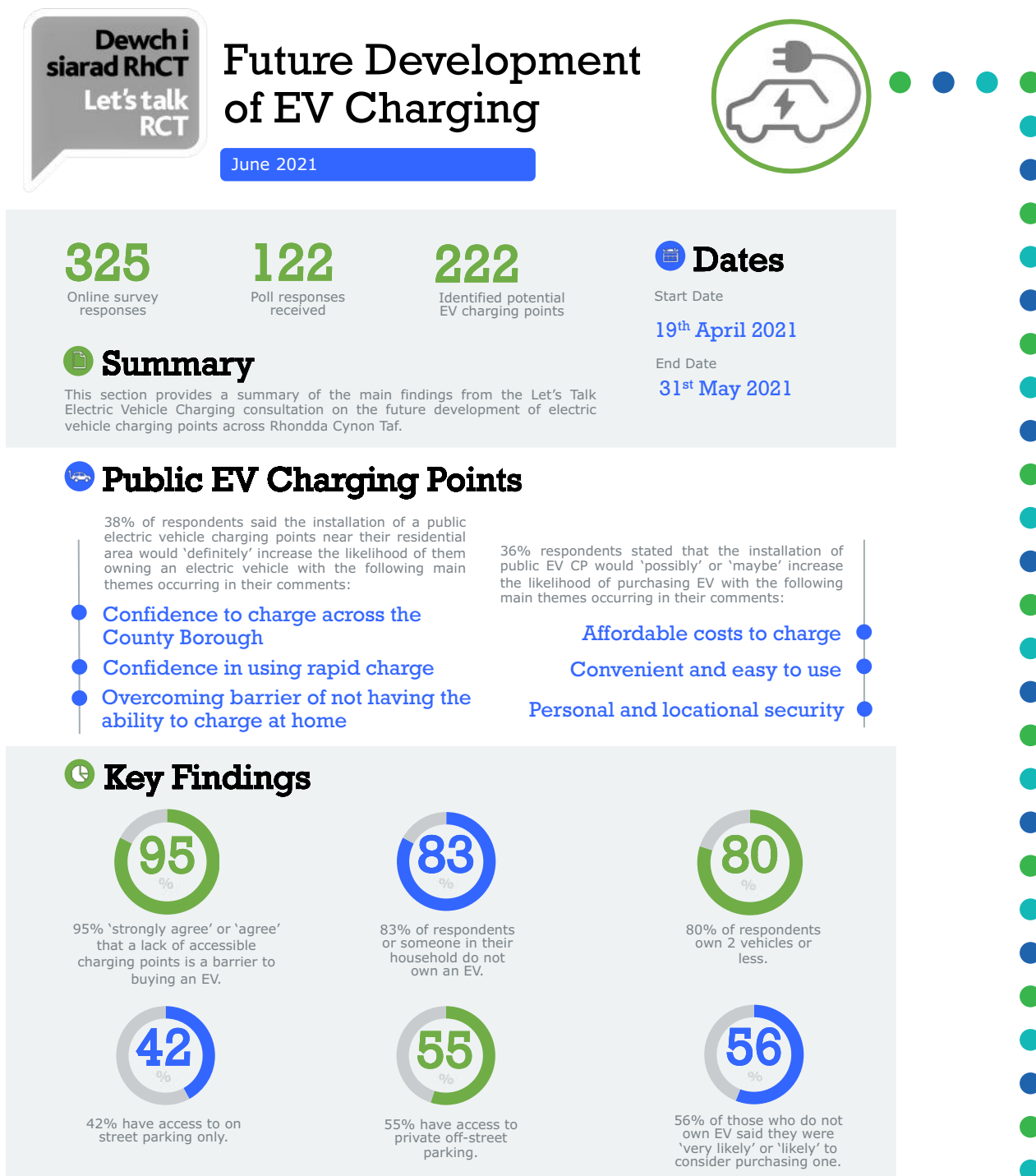


Figure 5: Summary of Let's Talk RCT: Future Development of EV Charging Consultation responses.



Developing a Public Charge Point Network



Planning

New Building Planning Requirements

In February 2021, the Welsh Government published the new nationwide spatial planning policy document for Wales entitled "Future Wales, The National Plan 2040". Figure 6 illustrates the key target dates for the development of a public charge point network.

Future Wales is a plan promoting development that enhances well-being and quality of life. It is a framework to help focus on achieving big ambitions when developing and regenerating cities, towns, and villages. Future Wales empowers plans at regional and local scales to identify schemes and projects that benefit communities and help to achieve national ambitions.

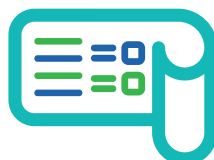
As such, Future Wales seeks to guide the production of the new Local Development Plans (LDP) which themselves guide development throughout the Welsh Planning Authority areas. The LDP contains details of new housing, employment, retail sites, and policies both national and local, which are used to determine planning applications.

The Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan 2006-2021 is due to be replaced by a new Revised Local Development Plan 2020-2030. The process of building the revised LDP has begun including the broad stakeholder involvement of the public, community groups, commercial developers, public bodies and service providers. The process will consider how appropriate land use can reduce the need to travel and/or how land use can influence travel choices. The objective is to develop a strategic approach to ULEV charging in our area, and develop specific local policies in accordance with Planning Policy Wales 11, which has placed a new emphasis on sustainable forms of development.

The revised LDP will cover a breadth of development areas and address Rhondda Cynon Taf specific matters. It is expected that these policies and site allocations would be associated with housing, commercial and industrial developments, alongside tourism, transport, mineral extraction, and waste proposals (amongst others). The Revised LDP will also seek to protect the unique built and natural assets of the County Borough, such as our most important buildings and structures, landscapes, ecology, and our greenspaces; all incorporating and encouraging a more sustainable and carbon considerate way of living.

In relation to Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure, Policy 12 of Future Wales states:

Where car parking is provided for new non-residential development, planning authorities should seek a minimum of 10% of car parking spaces to have electric vehicle charging points.



Further;



When requiring electric vehicle charging points, planning authorities should ensure the level, location and type of provision is appropriate to the scheme and local circumstances. It may be appropriate for some of the provision to be 'passive', with the necessary underlying infrastructure provided to enable installation and activation in the future. Planning authorities should take a strategic approach to electric vehicle charging in their area and, where appropriate, develop policies in their development plan and specific local requirements. The provision of electric vehicle charging infrastructure points should be planned as part of the overall design of a development.



This guidance supports the Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy for Wales 2021, which has an overarching vision for charging in Wales that "by 2025, all users of electric cars and vans in Wales are confident that they can access electric vehicle charging infrastructure when and where they need it".

This Strategy also confirms that the provision of the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive will be transposed into the Welsh Buildings Code, such that all new homes with off-street parking provision will be required to be EV charging ready. Similarly, all new or substantially refurbished non-domestic buildings with dedicated parking will be required to have at least 10% of parking spaces allocated for EV charging.

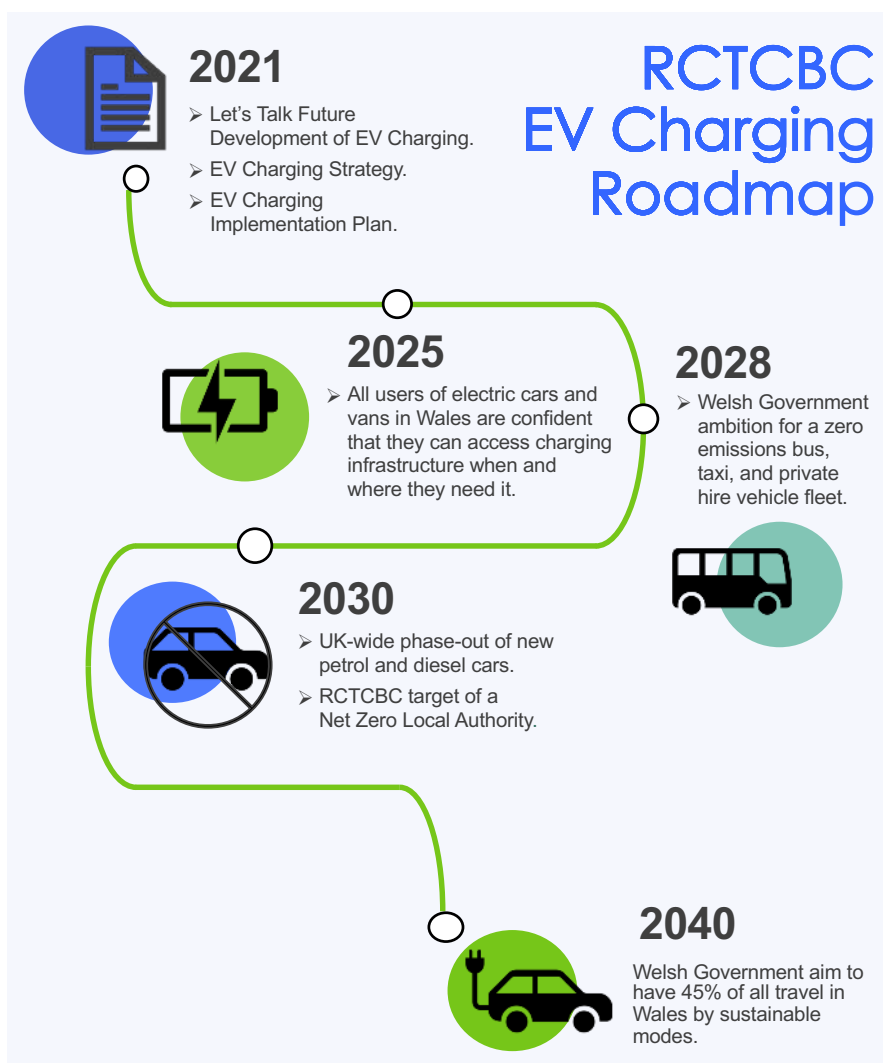
The aim of the strategy and implementation plan is to address changes needed and recommend actions required across the short, medium and long term.

**Short term -
the next 2 to 5 years**

**Medium term -
the next 5 to 7 years**

**Long term -
the next 7 to 10 years**


Figure 6: A summary of the key target dates regarding Electric Vehicle (EV) charging.



Planning Locations

The Consultation Report identified that 55% of respondents to the survey have access to their own private off-street parking. However, 42% of respondents have access to on-street parking only. Currently, 68% of respondents who own an electric vehicle use home charging typically parked on private land, including driveways and garages, where owners can charge their vehicles at their leisure. As EV ownership increases, there will be a continuing demand for alternative charging points, both for visitors and for those residents who do not have access to private off-street parking when circumstances dictate that on-street facilities cannot be safely provided adjacent to their residence. This highlights the importance in developing a charging network that considers both on and off-street charging options.

In considering where to install EV charging units, several factors must be taken into consideration, including, but not exclusively: Planning regulations, suitability of the local electrical distribution network, accessibility to residents and visitors, existing or projected demand and security and safety. Regardless of which sites are chosen for future EV charging units, the developer must first check whether the new installation requires planning permission or not.

Most typical EV charging units can be installed without planning permission, i.e. they are a "Permitted Development", providing they are sited within an area already lawfully used for off-street parking. However, to be classed as such, the development must comply with the relevant criteria set out in Schedule 2, Part 2, Classes D or E of the  **Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Amendment) (Wales) Order 2019**.

The criteria set out in the above Order identifies physical parameters regarding the size, positioning and number of units that can be installed without having to apply for planning permission. In summary, Permitted Development would be:

- The installation of a wall mounted EV charging unit within an area already lawfully used for off-street parking, (private drive or car park), if the outlet and casing would not exceed 0.2 cubic metres in size, face onto and be within 2 metres of a highway, or be within a site designated as a scheduled monument.

- The installation of an upstand with an EV charging unit within an area already lawfully used for off-street parking, (private drive or car park), providing the upstand and outlet would not exceed 1.6 metres in height from the level of the surface used for the parking of vehicles, be within 2 metres of a highway, be within a site designated as a scheduled monument, or result in more than one upstand being provided for each parking space.

In addition, a Local Authority can erect EV charging units and any associated infrastructure on land belonging to or maintained by them, e.g. pavements, etc., providing the equipment does not exceed 4 metres in height, or 200 cubic metres in capacity.

Should the proposed installation not comply with the relevant criteria identified above, planning permission would be required.

The Permitted Development criteria set out above is also relevant to installations in designated Conservation Areas, or within the curtilage of a Listed Building. Any installation should be as sympathetic to its surroundings as possible.

However, it advised that any installation within the curtilage of a Listed Building would require separate Listed Building Consent and that any installation within a designated Conservation Area that would involve demolition, either partial or complete of any unlisted structures, would require separate Conservation Area Consent.



Local Electricity Network

In some areas the capacity of the electrical supply network is likely to be a limiting factor, regarding the existing cable infrastructure and its ability to cater for the installation new of EV chargers. Areas of concern will need to be identified at the outset of any project planning process, especially where the intention is to install Rapid or Direct Current charging facilities, as these may not be permitted in certain circumstances.

All new public EV charging installations must have the approval of Western Power Distribution Ltd (WPD), as the local Distribution Network Operator (DNO) who manage the Electrical Supply Network in South Wales. WPD's role is to ensure that any new EV charging installations can be successfully supported by the local electricity supply network without compromising existing supplies. Where a local network must be upgraded to accommodate new EV units, this can greatly increase the cost and duration of any new EV installation.

Western Power Distribution - Connections for Electric Vehicle charge points.

The Council will need to consider the impact of increasing the provision of charge point infrastructure on the local electricity network. Local enhancements to the WPD network and installation of mini substations will add additional costs to charge point installation. Close dialogue needs to be maintained with WPD to ensure that the true costs in terms of time and money of any proposed EV charger location, are factored into the decision-making process. These discussions will help to give insight to the suitability of locations for charge point installation which will be included by the EVC Implementation Plan.



Security

Adequate security measures will require essential consideration in the rollout of charging infrastructure. The consultation identified that 36% of respondents said the installation of public charging points would “possibly” or “maybe” increase the likelihood of them purchasing an electric vehicle, with security as a common emerging reason for this. Furthermore, 36% of respondents said they would be happy to charge a vehicle in a remote hub / location. Again, one of the main emerging reasons was providing sufficient security measures are in place to ensure the location is a safe place to leave a vehicle.

Personal safety and security are also paramount in deciding suitable charge point locations. Consideration should be given to whether the street/car park lighting is adequate, also the installation of CCTV provision at some charge point sites would help in addressing such concerns. It is also possible that extra bespoke measures may need to be introduced to ensure some locations are safe for the public to use and walk home from.



Parking Enforcement

Parking enforcement will be required to help ensure that public charge point locations, designated for EV use only, are available as often as possible for EVs. The Council’s Civil Parking Enforcement team have powers to enforce both off-street parking (in regulated Council car parks) and on-street parking restrictions (which are supported by Traffic Regulation Orders).

It is envisaged that enforcement action may be required to deal with instances of non-EVs parking in designated EVC bays and also those vehicles that overstay time limits for charging, (which may be required to deter such behaviour). The Council will need to consider implementing restricted dwell times on EV bays during certain periods to discourage unfair usage, such as the use of the bay for extended periods, which in turn would prevent other users from accessing the charge point.

Due to the high percentage of terraced housing across the County Borough, the installation of any on-street charging points would require the addition of a marked parking bay reserved solely for the purpose of EV charging. RCT has a high proportion of terraced housing relying on on-street space for personal parking, and generally dedicated on-street residential parking bays,

where provided, are orientated parallel to the kerbside and irrespective of designated residential parking zones. The installation of dedicated EV parking bays could be objected to by non-EV user residents due to the already established high parking pressures, which may lead to neighbourhood conflict where numerous residents are competing for one charging bay, or indeed if the charging bay is used for parking ‘traditional’ vehicles, thus preventing access to the facility for EV owners.

For on-street parking, a relevant Traffic Regulation Order, (TRO), must be put in place by the Council to enable and support any subsequent civil parking enforcement. Consideration must be given to the additional costs and risk of delay that the TRO process adds to the installation. In addition, as part of the TRO, on-street charging bays will require suitable signage and markings to indicate that such bays are for EV use only and to help prevent longer than necessary occupancy. The Council’s subsequent EVC Implementation plan will acknowledge these necessary considerations if and where on-street EV charge points are intended to be installed.

Funding, Deployment and Management

In the process of increasing the provision of additional EV charge points across the County Borough, consideration should be given to how the funding of their installation, management and maintenance will be appropriately resourced. In order to do this, the development of a model that distinguishes the type of ownership and management the Council have over existing and new charge points is a key requirement of our strategy.

Generally, a charge point network will require:

- **An owner of the charge point,**
- **A manager, responsible for the day-to-day running of the charge point, including planned maintenance, reactive repairs and setting costs for charging devices,**
- **A network operator, responsible for the software system to enable the use of the charge point by customers.**

Typically, there are seven installation options, or 'models', available in terms of the type of

installation, ownership and management of the charge points. Table 2 provides a brief overview of the various options that RCTCBC will have to consider in the roll out of an EV charging network: Consideration of the most appropriate model option for charge point deployment and back-office management arrangement, i.e., in-house, or the use of a charge point provider to be adopted by RCTCBC is ongoing, with discussions being held to inform the Implementation Plan and deployment and management of a charging network.

Table 2: The various models of charge point infrastructure networks that should be considered.

| Option | Owner | Manager | Network Operator | Description |
|----------|-------------------------------|----------|------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| A | RCTCBC | RCTCBC | RCTCBC | High level of investment by the Council but offers the greatest flexibility. |
| B | RCTCBC | RCTCBC | Supplier | Includes the outright purchasing and maintenance of charge point, with the network run by a supplier with expertise. |
| C | RCTCBC | Supplier | Supplier | Involves the purchasing of the charge point from a supplier. However, the supplier is employed to manage and maintain the charge points, which reduces flexibility in charge point type, but does provide a point of contact for users. |
| D | Supplier | Supplier | Supplier | Requires leasing Council land to the supplier for charge point installation. However, this risks the installation of charge points in isolation of public demand and location attractiveness for RCT users. The apparatus may revert to the client on completion of the agreement/contract. Revenue is shared. |
| E | Private Enterprise | | | A charge point network developed by commercial providers presents no financial risk to the Council, but risks installation of charge points in isolation of public demand and location attractiveness RCT for users. |
| F | Hybrid | | | A Private Enterprise would roll out the majority of the charging points but the complimentary RCT network could 'fill in the gaps' by providing chargers in less attractive locations thus ensuring a high level of equality of provision across the County Borough. This option could be rolled out quickly and would reduce the risk of unequal and perceived to be unfair provision. |
| G | Community & Social Enterprise | | | Multiple configurations of ownership and management could be achieved. Funding could be obtained by 'not for personal profit' community groups. There is an option for these community groups to own and/or manage these chargepoints. Alternatively, agreement can be made between the community group and Council enabling the Council to then own and manage these chargepoints. This option would enable greater funding opportunity as community groups can apply for a number of grant schemes. |

OZEV Grant Funding Scheme

The Office for Zero Emission Vehicles (OZEV) has recently announced £20 million for the On-Street Residential Charge Point Scheme (ORCS) for the 2021-22 financial year. The scheme offers Local Authorities support to part fund (75%) the capital costs relating to the procurement and installation of on-street EV charge point infrastructure and an associated dedicated parking bay (where required) while the remaining 25% must be secured from other sources. ORCS will provide up to £7,500 per charge point installation, or up to £13,000 in exceptional circumstances.



UK Government Guidance

In order to determine the role public sector bodies will play in ensuring EV infrastructure is developed to meet the needs of residents, the Local Government Association (LGA) has commissioned Local Partnerships to carry out a research project to identify the role that Councils feel would be most appropriate for them with regards to EV charging, and to identify barriers that prevent them undertaking a more proactive role at the current time. The project's focus is on the charging of private cars and vehicles in residential areas where there is no option for on-street charging ([More information here](#)).

The outputs of the study will be used by the LGA to support discussions with Government relating to ongoing funding schemes, such as the ORCS, and provide evidence to define the support required by Local Authorities in increasing the provision of EV infrastructure.

Charge Point Speed and Power Ratings

In addition to the above considerations, the Council will have to consider the fast-paced development of charging solution technology to prevent the installation of charge points that could become quickly outdated. For example, EV batteries are increasing in size, rendering low-power charging supplies less useful beyond the short-term, which may ultimately lead to trickle charging becoming an insufficient charging option for many vehicles. A summary of the different types of charge points currently available for on-street and public use is provided in figures 7 and 8 below:

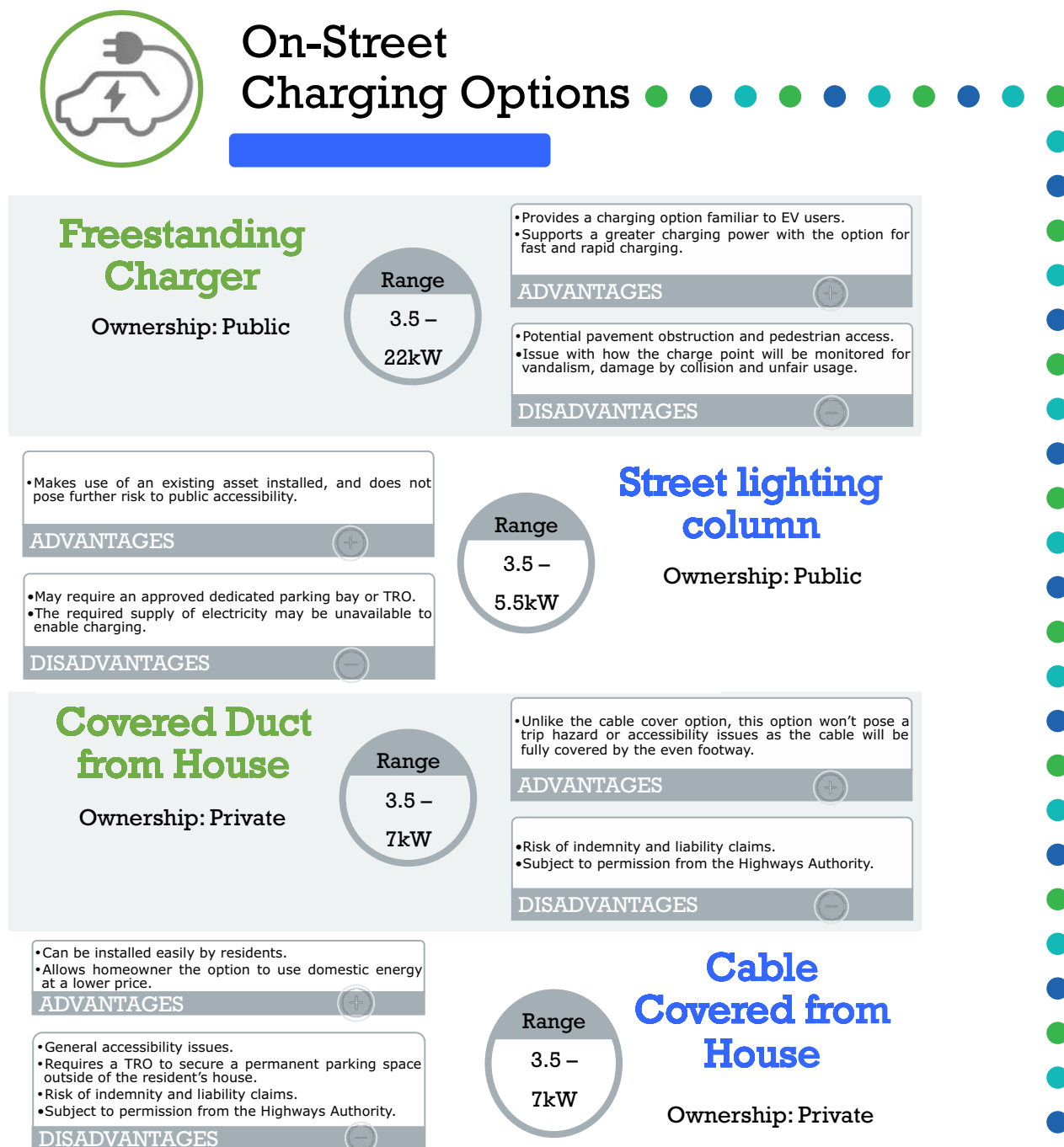
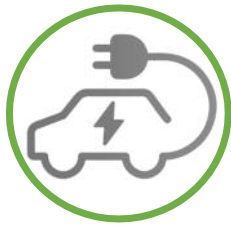


Figure 7: On-street charge point types.

Important Note: Where supplies are to be derived from private commercial properties or dwellings, design consideration will need to be given to the type of incoming electrical supply and associated earthing arrangements. BS.7671 is quite specific in the requirements for earthing in these areas and any property with a TNC-S (or PME) supply will pose a potential danger to users or passers-by should the incoming neutral be lost or severed. Charging units that automatically disconnect the supply to the vehicle in the event of a neutral fault would be recommended for use in such circumstances, but these come at a far higher cost.

It should be noted that for EV chargers in excess of 7kW, in every case, permission will need to be obtained from Western Power Distribution before installation can commence.



Off-Street Charging Options

Three Pin Plug



Standard three-pin plug that can be connected to any 13 amp socket.

Socketed



An EV charge point that can be connected to by using either Type 1 or Type 2 cable.

Tethered



An EV charge point with a cable attached that has either a Type 1 or Type 2 connector.

CHARGERS

| TYPE | RANGE | LOCATIONS |
|-------|-------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| RAPID | 43kW plus | On-route short stay destination charging. |
| FAST | 7kW – 22 kW | Car parks, supermarkets, leisure centres and houses with off-street parking. |
| SLOW | UP TO 3kW | Top-up charging at home, work, and longer-stay destinations. |

CHARGING TIMES

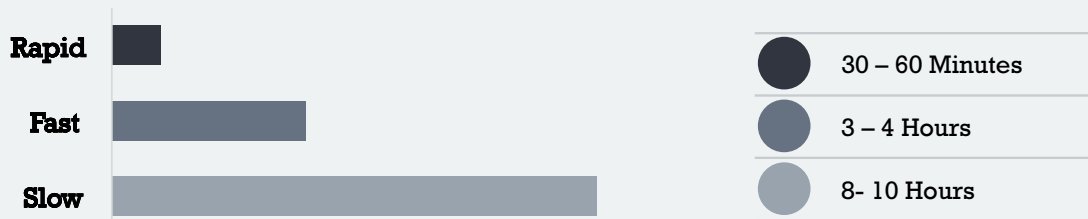


Figure 8: Off-street charge point types (Source: PodPoint).

Important Note: The type of charge point often determines whether a cable is tethered to the unit. Portable charging cables come with different connector options so can be used on untethered units.

Developers will have to consider the suitability of charge points type based on their safety, charging speed, cost, and their appropriate location for installation to closely meet the type of demand for increased EV use across the County Borough.



Destination Charging

Whilst the clear ambition would be to have EV charging facilities in every area of the County Borough, the early roll out of charging units will focus upon so-called “destination sites”. These are sites where people travel to, to access shops, hospitality, cultural and leisure services, and major transport hubs. Thus, the first round of installations will most likely be located in Council car parks, in local shopping areas, and Park and Ride sites.

In addition to any projects being driven by RCTCBC, to develop a charging network, the Council is proactive at a regional level through the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal (CCRCD) and the Cardiff Capital Region Transport Authority (CCRTA).

The CCRTA plan to install, initially, in excess of thirty - 22kW chargers at Council owned public car parks across RCT. This will greatly expand the limited opportunities for residents of electric vehicles to charge their vehicles whilst visiting sites across in RCT and, by extension, across the region as a whole.

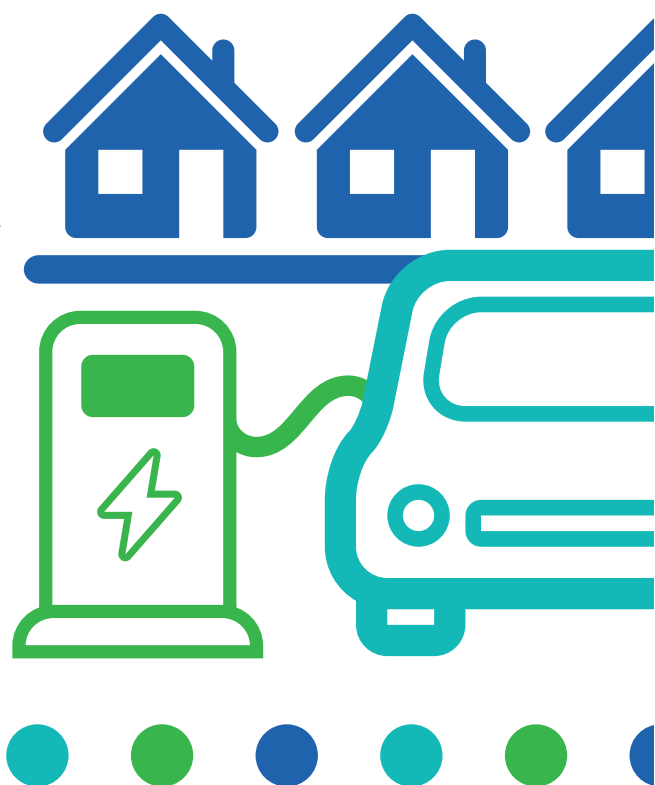
The CCRTA is also developing a bid to the OZEV, part of the UK Government, to expand this programme further, with match funding from the City Deal, which could provide up to £100,000 per Local Authority for charging infrastructure.

Many Supermarkets, and Tourism and Cultural attractions are installing EV charging points for their customers and visitors to use. RCT Council will engage with private sector “Destination Sites” to encourage them to provide similar facilities for their customers, whilst also giving prime consideration to the development of EV charge points within key target areas as determined by the Council and its Elected Members.

Residential Charging

The wide range of housing types within Rhondda Cynon Taf presents several challenges to the roll out of residential EV charging. For residential properties with their own private off-street parking, the installation of a charging unit is straightforward and will in most circumstances result in lower charging costs. Indeed, all new residential properties with off-street parking will be required to be “EV Ready” under new Welsh Government planning guidance.

Rhondda Cynon Taf, like all South Wales Valleys areas, has a large proportion of terraced residential houses. Local Authorities across the UK are trialling a variety of different options for on-street EV charging in areas with high levels of terraced housing, including designated charging bays, local community car parks with EV charging and street lighting adapted to provide EV charging. The Council are assessing all options going forward in order to provide a sustainable solution to facilitate accessible EV charging.





Workplace Charging

As the name would suggest, workplace charging is the provision of EV charging units in non-residential car parks, owned and operated by private businesses or public sector organisations. With the sale of new fossil fuelled cars and vans coming to an end in 2030, many companies and organisations are debating how to respond to this deadline and are beginning to develop proposals to “electrify” their vehicle fleet. The presence of workplace charging facilities also provides the opportunity for employees and visitors to use these units, subject to the agreement of the business or organisation concerned.

The UK Government is supporting the roll out of workplace charging by subsidising the cost of installing EV charging units through the Workplace Charging Scheme. ([Workplace Charging Scheme: guidance for applicants, charge point installers and manufacturers - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)).

The Welsh Government’s Future Wales Planning Policy Plan 2040 also sets out that all new or substantially refurbished non-domestic buildings with dedicated parking will be required to have at least 10% of parking spaces allocated for EV charging.

The Council will investigate and promote the expansion of its EV charging facilities, both for its own Fleet vehicles and intended staff use and where appropriate, for visitors and users of the Authority’s Leisure and Cultural facilities.

Other Electric Vehicles



TAXIS



Table 3: Breakdown of the ULEV transformation fund grant awarded to the Cardiff City Region in the year 2020-2021.

(Source: [Welsh Government](#)).



Taxis

The Council is currently working with the CCRC and the CCRTA on a [Taxi Strategy for South East Wales](#) to convert all taxis to EV by the Welsh Government target date of 2028. Following successfully securing £1.3M of Welsh Government funding during 2020/21, a contract has been let to establish a charging network for taxis across the region, together with a scheme to procure a fleet of wheelchair accessible electric taxis that can be leased to operators on a “try before you buy” basis. Table 5 below provides a breakdown of the ULEV transformation fund grants awarded to the Cardiff City Region in the year 2020-2021. Other initiatives to encourage taxi operators to switch to an electric vehicle fleet will also be rolled out, including incentivisation schemes and webinars to provide information and support towards the transition to electric vehicles.

| Scheme | Amount |
|-----------------------------------------------|------------|
| Taxi ULEV infrastructure | £1,040,000 |
| Bus ULEV infrastructure | £100,000 |
| Transport Hub ULEV infrastructure WelTAG 2/3 | £100,000 |
| EV roadshow with drive and ride opportunities | £56,000 |



BUSES



Buses

There are a number commercially available electric buses in the UK and some trials are underway, predominantly in urban areas. These vehicles rely upon being charged overnight in their Depots and presently must return to Depot to re-charge. The Council does not operate any public service buses, but in the future will need to work with local bus operators, to explore the potential of installing additional electric bus charging points in our principal bus stations, should the need arise.

In relation to school transport, the South-East Wales Regional Transport Authority (RTA) have commissioned Cenex to undertake a study on the transition towards an EV bus fleet. Barriers towards this transition have been identified such as the affordability and deliverability due the age of current fleet, and their retrospective large capital cost to replace.

Trials are also underway of Hydrogen fuelled buses in the UK, which are proving to be better suited for longer journeys in urban and rural areas. Another advantage is that hydrogen fuel can be replenished in minutes at a refuelling station, although the number of re-fuelling sites is very limited at present. In the future, hydrogen fuelled buses may prove to be a viable alternative option for regions of the UK, like the South Wales Valleys, but at present both cost and availability remain substantial barriers that need to be overcome.



CAR CLUBS



E-MOTORCYCLES / E-MOPEDS



E-BICYCLES / MOBILITY SCOOTERS

Car Clubs

Car Clubs operate to provide drivers with a vehicle for short term hire, typically for a couple of hours up to a maximum of 24 hours. These clubs are particularly located in urban areas, where drivers may not want the expense of owning a vehicle but will need access to one on an infrequent basis. Many clubs are now switching to electric vehicles as their fossil fuelled vehicles are replaced.

The Council will explore the potential of engaging with Car Club operators to set up a scheme in the County Borough in the future. The potential implementation of such schemes will have positive socio-economic benefits, as it will increase access to electric vehicles for those that cannot commit to the expense of owning an electric vehicle. The Council could also consider the use of such Car Clubs amongst the Council's Grey Fleet.

E-Motorcycles / E-mopeds

Road legal E-Motorcycles and E-Mopeds are becoming increasingly popular for commuting and as light delivery vehicles. They can all be charged using a standard 3 pin plug and many have the added advantage of removable batteries, enabling a fully charged battery to be inserted whilst the flat battery is put on charge.

Many E-Motorcycles and Mopeds can also be charged at public charging stations, although they are restricted to using Slow (3 – 7 kW) units.

E-Bicycles / Mobility Scooters

E-Bicycles are popular vehicles for commuting and for leisure activities. Due to the battery sizes, they can only be recharged using a standard 3-pin socket and cannot use the public charging stations. Most E-Bicycle batteries are removable and so can be swapped for a fully charged battery, if available.

Consideration will need to be given by planners and developers to the provision of "Destination Charging" for both these modes of transport, together with those immediately above. One option could be to provide indoor public charging facilities for the batteries only, (with bikes/scooters to be parked up and secured as normal), within publicly accessible buildings or sites, (e.g. public libraries or parks buildings).

Continuing to work closely with our partners on a regional basis will promote all the benefits of joint working. Such coordinated actions will help realise all available funding early in the process, enabling the delivery of projects that meet the needs of essential parts of the commercial sector, such as taxis and buses, whilst ensuring that any major projects, such as transport hubs, are able to maximise all opportunities that may present themselves in the future.



Expanding the Council Electric Vehicle Network



Fleet Vehicles

At present, the Council's fleet is predominantly diesel based. However, the Council have been trialling Hybrid and EV vehicle options, as well as alternative fuel options, with the intention of moving towards the use of more sustainable forms of fuel. The Council are in the process of formally evaluating its fleet composition with the aim of identifying the necessary measures required to transition to a low emission vehicle fleet. This is being conducted in conjunction with the Welsh Government ULEV project, for which data gathering commenced in December 2020. Direct EV charger requirements to accommodate the changes to fleet are also being considered by the project.

The resource for this study is largely provided by Welsh Government, (after RCT Council successfully bid for Transition support from Welsh Government), and when completed, the report will provide information on the various aspects of road transport emissions and the potential actions to move the area towards the overall Net Zero ambition.

Procurement

In 2017, the Welsh Government set the ambition of achieving a Net Zero public sector by 2030. The Welsh Government published the document "Prosperity for All: A Low Carbon Wales" in March 2019, which laid out a collection of policies and proposals to help meet carbon budget and emission reduction targets.

In May 2021, the Welsh Government published the  **Public Sector Net Zero Reporting Guide**, which is a guide for the public sector in Wales to estimate their net carbon footprint including both direct and indirect

emissions, including procurement. It is important to ensure that all future tenders regarding EVs and EV charging infrastructure is completed in a way that will help reduce the Council's footprint.

It is also important to ensure that the development of the EV charging infrastructure network is congruous with the procurement of an EV fleet. The success of the transition from petrol and diesel vehicles to electric vehicles will be subject to how effective and accessible the EV charging infrastructure will be for all EV drivers.





Staff and Visitor EV Charging

The provision of EV charging facilities by both private and public sector organisations for the use of visitors and/or staff will provide an appreciable contribution to the EV charging network in the future.

However, these EV charge points are normally not available to the public, nor are they available 24/7. Many Supermarket operators have installed free EV charging units for their customers (on a time limited basis), with some now also offering rapid charging for a small fee. Chargers can also be found at some tourist attractions.

The Council has recently installed an EV charging unit at a Sports Centre for the use of visitors, who must request access from the Sports Centre Reception to activate the unit. Users of this charging facility will pay a small zero-profit hourly-fee for the electricity they use. This unit, when operational, will be available during opening hours of the Sports Centre.

Many recently constructed schools and all new future schools will be required to provide EV charging facilities. These will be solely for the use of school visitors, staff and where available, school vehicles e.g., Minibuses. They will not be available for the public to use.

The Council is surveying its other owned and operated facilities to develop an ongoing programme of similar EV charging installations across its sites.



Impact Assessments




Equalities

The need for a substantial increase in the number of slow, fast and rapid charging devices available across the County Borough has been identified. Promoting equality of access to charging is therefore paramount to this strategy.

Under the  **Equality Act 2010**, RCTCBC has a duty to make decisions with due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination
- Advance equal opportunity
- Foster good relations on the basis of protected characteristics

As such, an equality assessment has been undertaken to ensure the Council is making informed, effective and fair decisions whilst being in compliance with relevant legislation such as the aforementioned Equality Act 2010.

Furthermore, the  **Well-being of Future Generations Act (WBFGA)** requires public bodies in Wales to think about the long-term impact of their decisions, to work better with people, communities, and each other and to prevent persistent problems such as poverty, health inequalities and climate change. To achieve this, the Act puts in place seven well-being goals which public bodies must work to achieve, as illustrated by figure 9 below.

A more equal Wales is one of the well-being goals which ensures that the Council works towards a society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter background or circumstances. This strategy will emphasise how the Council aims to create a more equal society with focus on disability equality and socio-economic equality. The Council has undertaken Impact Assessments detailing how this strategy will deliver on the well-being goals set out in WBFGA.

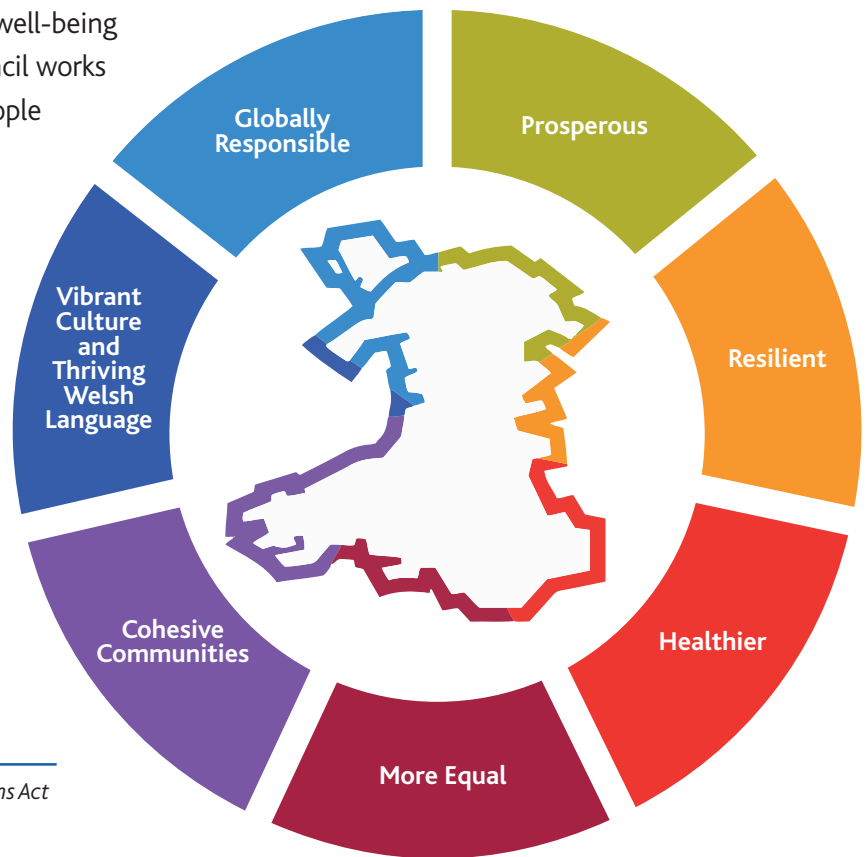



Figure 9: The Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 Well-being Goals.






Enabling Equality

The Council is committed to removing the barriers that disabled people face in society, including those that prevent people from accessing Council services. The UK Government’s Automated and Electric Vehicles Act details no specific regulations or definitions promoting access for disabled people. In addition, there are currently no national or international design standards both for the charging units themselves, nor the installation layout to ensure its accessibility to all EV drivers. In most cases, EV drivers with a disability do not have access to charging units away from their own home. A study by the charity  **Motability** and RiDC on the opinions of disabled electric vehicle drivers found that charging infrastructure may not be accessible for a large proportion of disabled people, and by 2035 it is estimated that there will be 2.7million drivers with disabilities, with approximately 1.4 million being mainly reliant on public charging facilities.

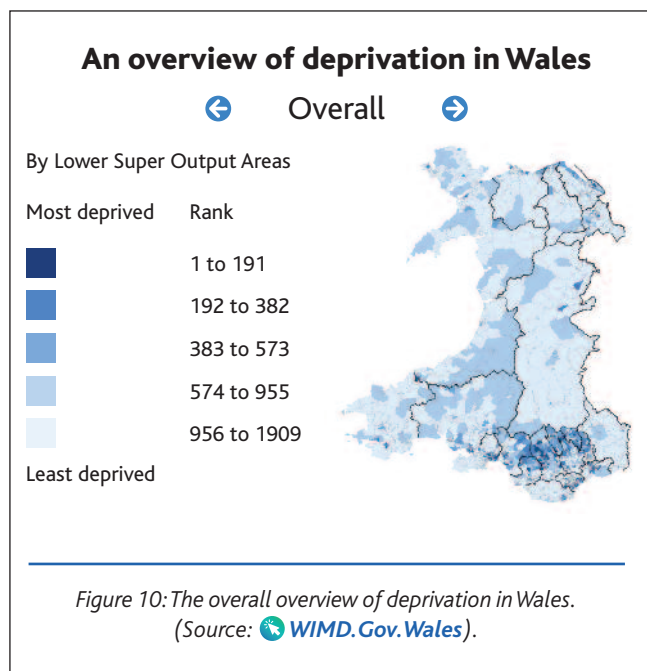
In light of this, work is being undertaken to make EV charging infrastructure in the UK accessible for people living with disabilities. A set of accessibility standards for EV charge points across the country will be developed in partnership with Motability, the UK Government and the British Standards Institute (BSI). These standards are expected to be published by summer 2022 and will provide guidance on how to make charge points more accessible.

Despite the lack of published guidance to date, this strategy will advocate for disability and accessibility equality in the roll out of EV charge points, in line with the Council’s  **Equality and Diversity Policy**. Working with the Council’s Disability Forum, the Implementation Plan will aim to address identified barriers and set uniform standards regarding kerb height, adequate spacing and charge points being of a height suitable for wheelchair users.

Socio- Economic Equality

The official measure of relative deprivation for small areas across Wales is provided by the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD). It provides insight into those communities across Wales with the highest levels of deprivation. Deprivation refers to the lack of access to opportunities and resources in our society. Figure 10 below provides an overview of the overall deprivation in Wales. According to the WIMD data, RCT contains some of the most deprived areas in Wales.

The Council strives to work towards achieving the well-being goal of a more equal Wales and to abide by the Equality Act 2010 by increasing access to opportunities and resources, in this case by promoting access to an affordable EV charging infrastructure. The Council aims to achieve this by ensuring equal access to charging facilities, no matter background or circumstance. The EV Charging Strategy will aim to support the alleviation of poverty and deprivation, improve access to employment opportunities, improve access to skills and to develop improved infrastructure and healthier communities. To ensure this, the Council will ensure that charging infrastructure will be designed inclusively and will be fairly priced to increase both physical and financial accessibility.





Welsh language

Public bodies must work to achieve all seven well-being goals put in place by the WBFGA, with achieving a Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language being one of the seven goals. The Welsh Government's ambition is to see the number of people able to enjoy speaking and using the Welsh language to reach a million by the year 2050, for further information see the [🌐 Cymraeg 2050 Welsh Language Strategy](#). The Council intends to support this ambition by providing the conditions to facilitate an increase in the use of the Welsh Language.

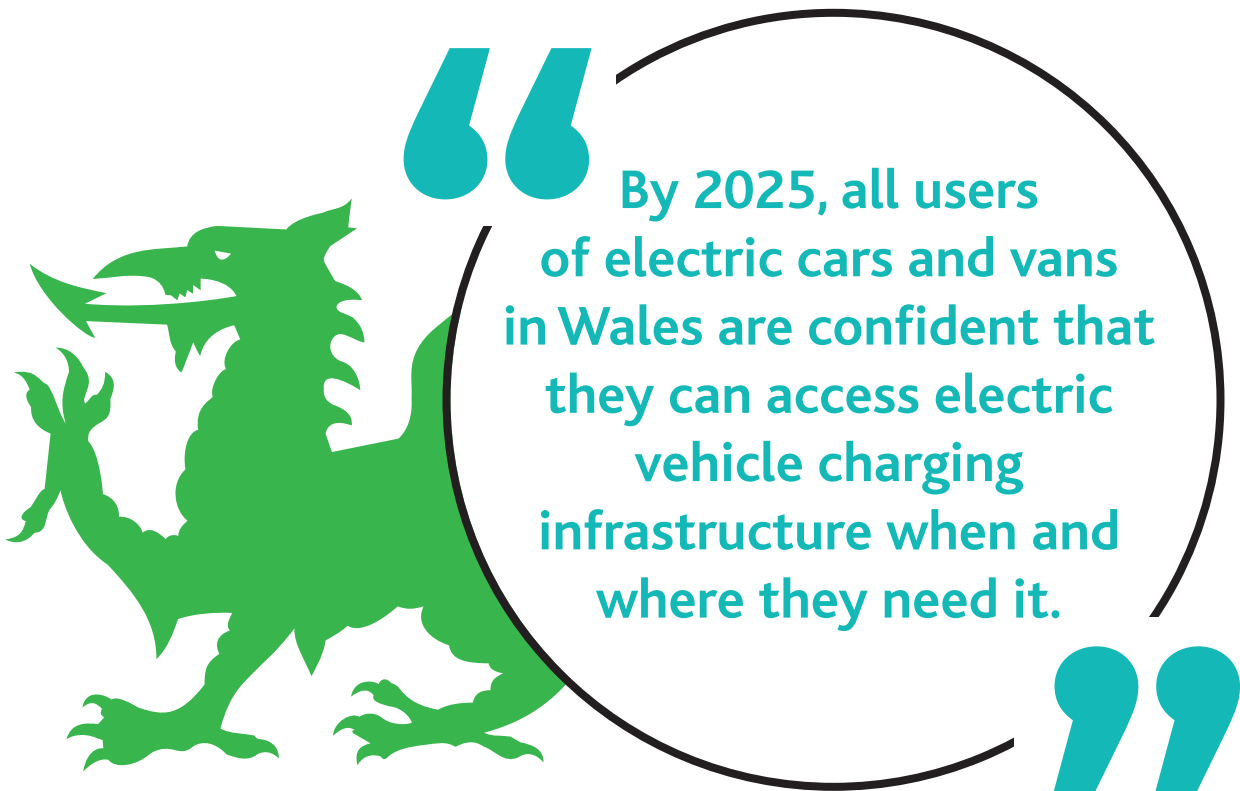
Under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011, RCTCBC has a duty to comply with specific standards in respect of the delivery of Welsh language services. To ensure that we meet the requirements of the Measure, we have undertaken a Welsh Language Impact Assessment to evaluate the likely (or actual) effects of the Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy (EVCS) on the Welsh language, both within our workforce and in the community, so that we can mitigate any negative impacts and enhance the positive impacts.

In line with the Council's Welsh Language Promotional Strategy, the EVCS will ensure that bilingual Welsh first signage and Welsh language services are available on the charging devices installed by the Council, or its Contractors, throughout the County Borough. The Council will also use its influence to encourage other Charge Point providers to implement the same measures to support the Welsh Language.

Accessibility

All charge point locations will need to be designated for EV use only when charging and should ideally be available 24/7, particularly if the intended users are local residents. The expectations of residents will need to be promoted judiciously, particularly in the case of on-street charge point installation, where several health and safety issues will also come into play, both of a technical and practical nature.

 A Vision for Charging in Wales:

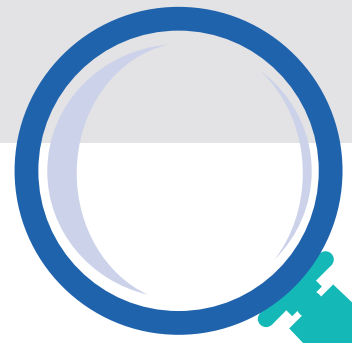


To achieve the Welsh Government's vision for charging in Wales, there is a clear need for better quality charging to improve the user experience for electric cars and vehicles, including better accessibility and inclusivity. As such, all charge point locations will need to be designed to safely meet accessibility standards, which will make charging facilities available to everyone, particularly for those most vulnerable and those with accessibility needs.





Glossary



Climate Change:

Net Zero - Some carbon is still released but is offset by renewables we pay for.

Carbon Neutral - Some carbon is still released but is offset by someone else or somewhere else.

Decarbonisation - The action of cutting greenhouse gas emissions.



Vehicle Types:

Electric Vehicle (EV) - Term used to encompass all vehicles that use electric as a fuel source.

Ultra-Low Emission Vehicle (ULEV) - A vehicle that produces less than 75g of Carbon Dioxide for each kilometre driven.

Battery Electric Vehicles (BEV) - A vehicle that runs entirely on electric powered by a battery and charged using a dedicated charge point using mains electricity supply.

Hybrids - Combustion engine and electric propulsion motor. Battery charged through regenerative braking, very low zero emission range.

Plug-in Hybrid Electric Vehicles (PHEV) - A vehicle that combines both traditional combustion engine with an option to plug in the vehicle to extend use of the battery. On average these vehicles will travel 30 miles on an electric battery, after this point the combustion engine will be used.

Plug-in Vehicle (PiV) - Refers to all vehicles that must be plugged in to charge.

Low Carbon Vehicle (LCV) - Refers to vehicles which emit fewer toxic and harmful gases than a standard car.

Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) - Refers to vehicles over a weight of 3.5 tonnes.



Charging:

Trickle Charge - The slowest form of charge at less than 2kW using a 3-pin plug. Time intensive, usually used for at-home overnight charging.

Slow Charge - Typically charge at less than 7kW and generally used for overnight charging of BEVs and top ups for hybrid vehicles, with a charge-up time of 8- 12 hours. Faster charging times and better safety features than 3-pin plugs.

Fast Charge - Typically charge at 7- 22kW with faster charging times and enabling users to make better use of off-peak energy tariffs. Typical charge-up time of 1.5- 5 hours.

Rapid/ Ultra Rapid Charge - Typically charge at 43- 350kW with an average charge time between 15- 45 minutes. These are generally located at service stations and public locations.

Type 1 Inlet - Type of connector with a 5-pin plug commonly used by Asian and American manufactures.

Type 2 Inlet - Type of connector with a 7-pin plug commonly used by European manufacturers. This connector type is more favourable with EV development due to their ability to carry a three-phase power supply.

Socketed - A charge point, with a socket, where you can connect either a Type 1 or Type 2 cable.

Tethered - A charge point, with no socket, but with a cable attached, with either a Type 1 or Type connector at the "vehicle end".

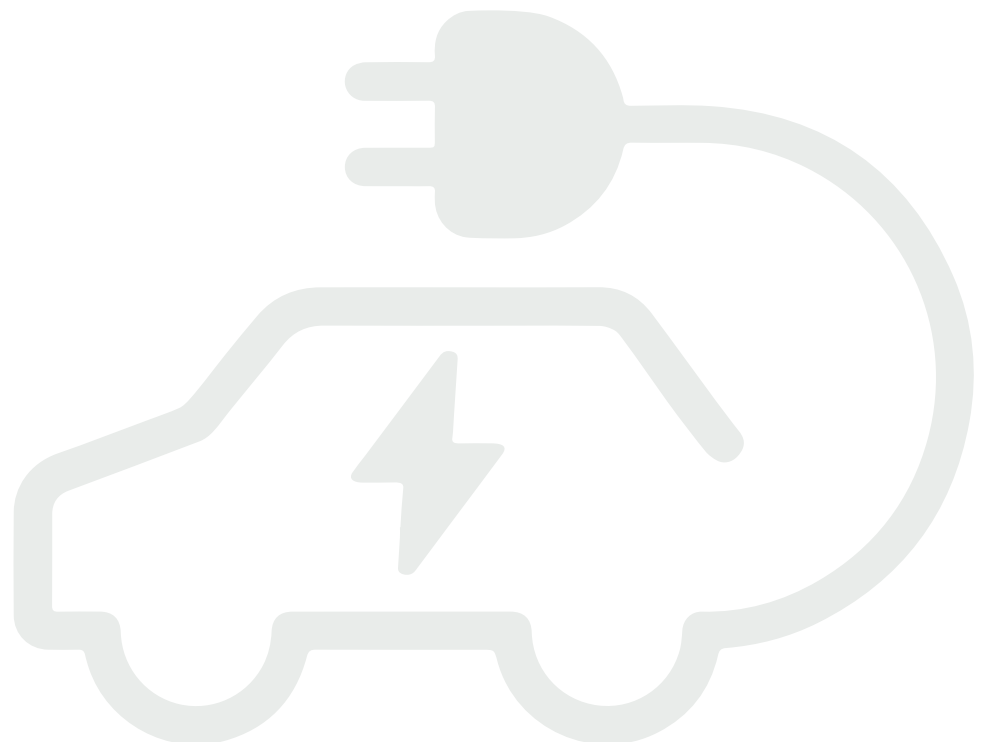
Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) - A legal document that restricts or prohibits the use of the highway network, in line with The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.



Energy:

Kilowatt (kW) - A measure of working power available.

Kilowatt Hour (kWh) - Measure of energy stored or used, also used to measure EV battery energy use.





NOTE:
TEXT TO BE UPDATED AT THE END WHEN DOCUMENT IS SIGNED OFF DUE TO CHANGES COULD HAVE KNOCK ON EFFECTS TO PAGES AND FORMATTING.

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Appendix II

Charging Devices in Wales

This map shows the density of charging devices by local authority. Figure 11 and 12 below illustrate:

- Devices per 100,000 population
- Rapid devices.

Note: Where a device has more than one speed of connector, it is classified as the highest-speed available.

Each map follows the same colour scale, with the bottom 20% of local authorities, the ones with the lowest number of devices being shown by pale yellow and the top 20% by dark blue.



Figure 11: The total number of public electric vehicle charging devices in Wales per 100,000 of the population, based on Office for National Statistics Population estimates for mid-year 2019. (Source: Department for Transport).

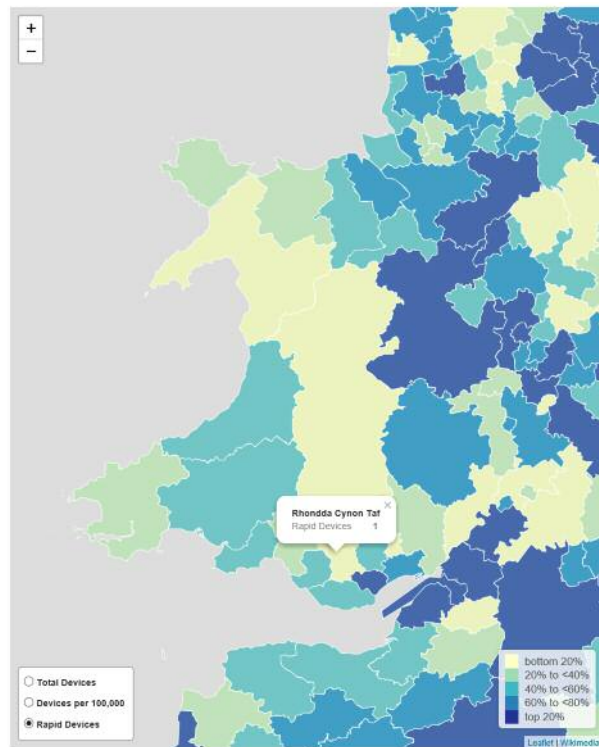


Figure 12: The total number of public rapid electric vehicle charging devices in Wales. 'Rapid devices' are those whose fastest connector is rated at 43kW or above. (Source: Department for Transport).

Appendix III

The following information has been taken from the March 2021 **report** that was presented to RCTCBC's Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group.

The Cardiff Capital Region Transport Authority (CCRTA) has been developing proposals to install 22kW charge points at a range of council owned sites across the region; such as public car parks and a bid has recently been submitted to Welsh Government (WG) for delivery in 2021/22. This will greatly expand the limited opportunities for residents of electric vehicles to charge their vehicles whilst visiting public car parks in RCT and other councils in the region. A list of sites included in the bid by the figure 13. The CCRTA is also developing a bid to the Office for Zero Emissions Vehicles, part of the UK Government, to expand this programme with further support and match funding from City Deal – this could provide up to £100,000 per local authority for charging infrastructure.

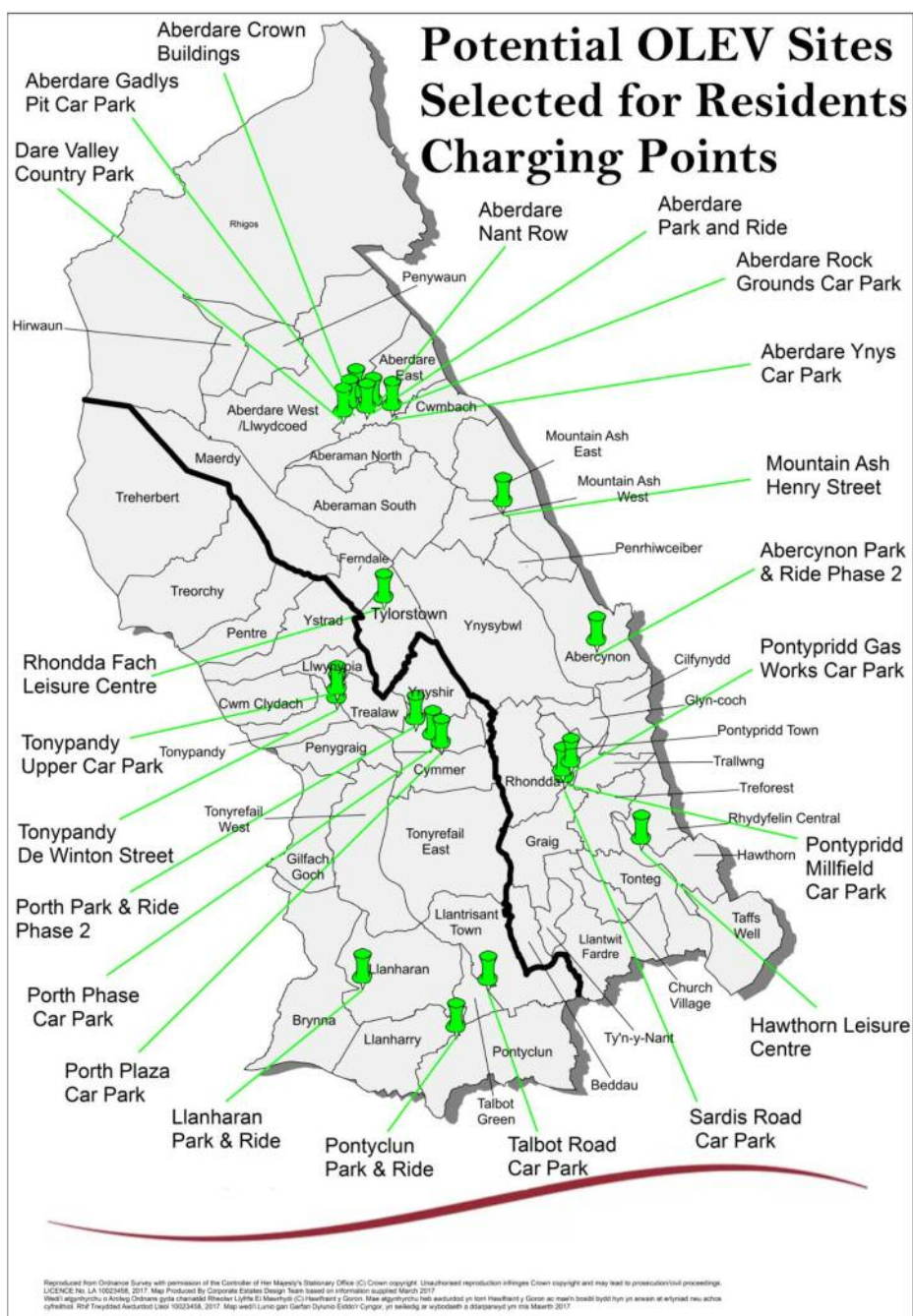


Figure 13: A list of sites included in the CCRTA bid to install 22kW charge point at a range of council owned sites across Rhondda Cynon Taf such as public car parks and a bid has recently been submitted to WG for delivery in 2021/22.

According to Department of Transport statistics dated October 2020 there were 13 Public Charging points in RCT as shown on the Map in figure 14 which is also included on Zap Map. Please note that the information that informed the development of this map was correct in October 2020. As of July 2021, this figure increased to 14 publicly available EV charging devices (of all speeds) located in Rhondda Cynon Taf, equating to 5.8 charging devices per 100,000 population. This updated information is illustrated by figure 3 in the main body of text and figures 11 and 12 located in appendix II.

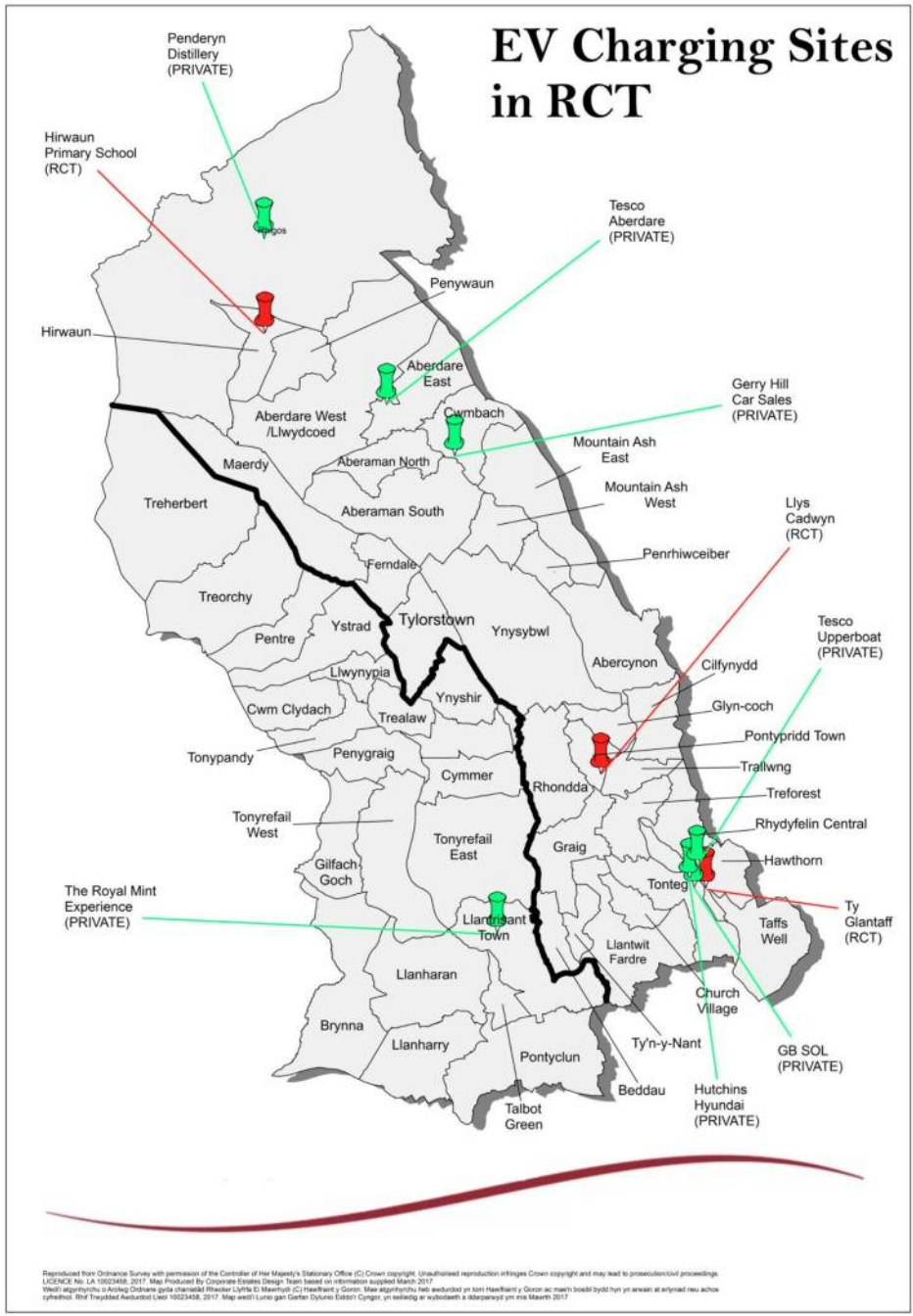


Figure 14: Public Charging points available across RCTCBC.

It is important to determine the best location and type of charging points across the County Borough. Rapid/Ultra rapid chargers (43 – 350kW) can be located at sites such as short-term car parks and Transport hubs, Fast chargers (7-22kW) can be located at public buildings such as leisure centres/long stay car parks and Slow chargers (<7kW) can be installed at workplaces/homes.

Figure 15 illustrates a map which is indicative of early considerations for EV Charging sites that can be developed to take account of a recent OLEV application made for off-street residents parking, with the aim of ensuring that there is a suitable geographical distribution of charging points across the County Borough.

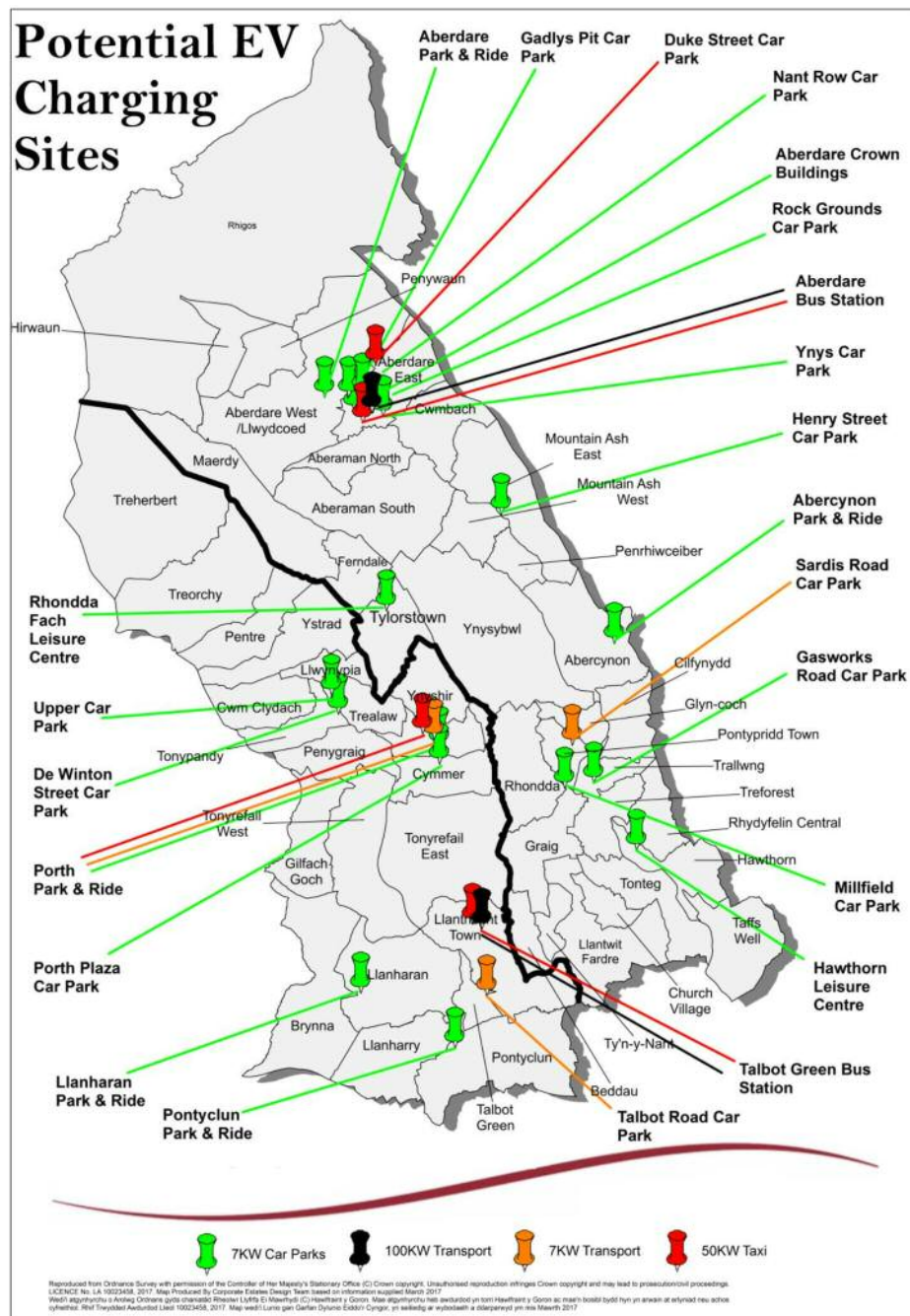


Figure 15: Map of RCT showing potential EV charging locations.



Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council

Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy 2021 - 2030

JN: 50915-41 September 2021

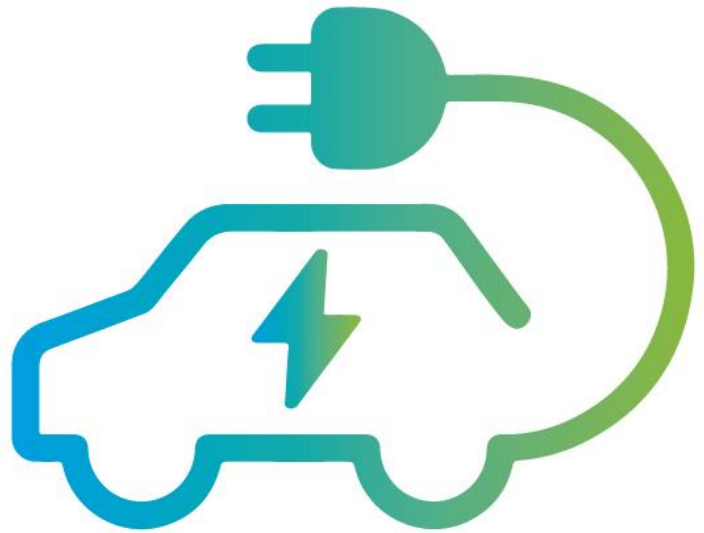


Rhondda Cynon Taf
Hinsawdd Ystyriol
Think Climate
Rhondda Cynon Taf



**Dewch i
siarad RhCT**
Let's talk
RCT

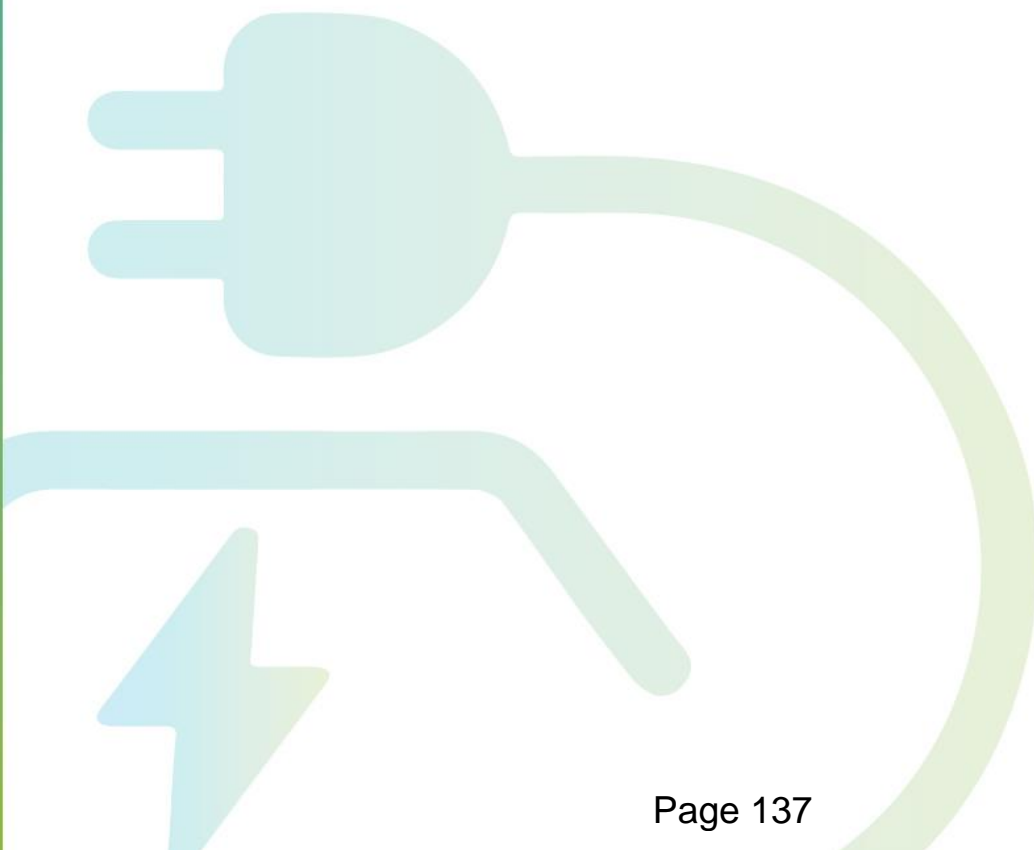
Electric
Vehicle
Charging



Phase 2 Consultation on the

Future Development of Electric Vehicle Charging

October 2021



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SUMMARY

- This section provides a summary of the main findings from Phase 2 of the Let's Talk Electric Vehicle Charging consultation on the future development of electric vehicle charging points across Rhondda Cynon Taf.
- The consultation was conducted in-house using the Council's new consultation and engagement website, [Let's Talk RCT](#).
- The data presented in this report does not include responses received in Phase 1 of this consultation, which ran from 19th April to 31 May 2021. The results from Phase 1 were used to assist in the writing of a draft Strategy.
- Phase 2 of the consultation started on the 1st June and ended on the 5th October 2021. This phase continued to gather data from the existing Let's Talk engagement tools, as well as introducing the draft Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy for comment.
- The draft Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy was added to the consultation website on the 6th September 2021, and visitors to the site were encouraged to provide feedback via the site tools and by directly emailing the Consultation team.
- 4 emails were received in response to the draft strategy.
- 100 poll responses were received, adding to the totals recorded in Phase 1.
- 178 places were identified as potential electric car charging points by 55 site users through the pin dropping function on the map, adding to the totals recorded in Phase 1.
- 4 users responded to the Stories prompt "If you already own an electric vehicle, share with us what has been good and/ or bad from your experience", adding to those received in Phase 1.
- Overall, 127 people engaged directly in the engagement on the Let's Talk Electric Vehicle Charging site during the period 1st June to 5th October 2021. 476 people were informed (viewed documents and multiple pages) and 1,000 were aware of the project (visited the site). This makes the totals throughout both phases of the consultation period 548 people who engaged, 1001 people who were informed, and 2184 people who were aware.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report presents the findings of the second phase of the Let's Talk Electric Vehicle Charging consultation on the future development of electric vehicle charging points across Rhondda Cynon Taf.
- 1.2 Section 2 outlines some brief background to the consultation process.
- 1.3 Section 3 details the methodology.
- 1.4 Section 4 provides the key findings of Phase 2 data.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In January 2020 the Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group received a report on ['Transportation – How Do We Reduce Our Carbon Emissions'](#) which provided an update on the situation regarding carbon emissions and transport and also identified the steps that could be taken to reduce such emissions.
- 2.2 Within the report it was identified that transport accounts for 14% of Wales' carbon emissions and in order to make the sector more resilient, efficient and low carbon in a cost-effective way the report discussed many topics such as; an integrated metro, active travel enhancements, electric vehicles and the charging infrastructure, home to school transport, land use planning, technology, car parking strategies, congestions charging or workplace car park charging and taxation. Furthermore, in November 2020, the UK Government announced the end of the sale of new petrol and diesel cars by 2030.
- 2.3 Whilst the use of electric vehicles is increasing year on year we need to assess the future demand for an EV charging infrastructure in RCT. Future projections indicate that approx. 8,000 EV's will be owned by residents in RCT by 2030. Whilst this is a relatively small proportion of the vehicles within RCT, they clearly need to be supported with a suitable charging infrastructure.
- 2.4 We need to determine the best location and type of charging points across the County Borough. As part of the report presented to the Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group in March 2021 ['Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure: Driving Change'](#) it outlines that In early 2018, there were 145 Ultra Low Emission Vehicles (ULEV) registered in Rhondda Cynon Taf, compared with 3,275 in Wales and 157,304 in the UK. Across the UK, demand is predicted to rise rapidly with one million ULEVs projected by the early 2020s and as many as nine million by 2030. If realised, and if growth in ULEV ownership continues to rise in RCT at a similar rate to the UK, there could be over 900 ULEVs in RCT by the early 2020s and over 8,000 by 2030.

- 2.5 Whilst the use of electric vehicles is increasing year on year we need to assess the future demand for an EV charging infrastructure in RCT. Future projections indicate that approx. 8,000 EV's will be owned by residents in RCT by 2030. Whilst this is a relatively small proportion of the vehicles within RCT, they clearly need to be supported with a suitable charging infrastructure.
- 2.6 As a result of the research above and the Council's need to develop an EV Charging and Infrastructure Strategy, this consultation was undertaken in order to obtain the views of potential EV users in RCT to help gauge potential take-up now and in the future.
- 2.7 The results from Phase 1 were used to assist in the writing of a draft Strategy.
- 2.8 The draft Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy was added to the consultation website in Phase 2, and visitors to the site were encouraged to provide feedback via the site tools and by directly emailing the Consultation team.

3. METHODOLOGY

Key actions included:

- 3.1 In Phase 1 we used an online consultation tool called "Let's Talk RCT". The site hosted the key consultation documents. Methods of engagement on the site include an online survey, short polls, the ability to map localised comments and a stories box (where users are invited to provide comment and can attach images or documents)
- 3.2 The online tools and information were promoted through all social media channels, print media and the Council's corporate website. A number of emails were sent to a range of stakeholders, including, environmental groups, the Council's Citizen's Panel, Older Persons Forums, Councillors, MPs, MSs, community hubs, Welsh language groups and other local Authorities.
- 3.3 The Council's social media team regularly posted in conjunction with the wider 'Climate Change Strategy' consultation to promote the site and consultation tools available.
- 3.4 In Phase 2 we promoted the draft Strategy on the website and via social media, and requested comments by email.
- 3.5 Overall, 127 people engaged directly in the engagement on the Let's Talk Electric Vehicle Charging site during the period 1st June to 5th October 2021. 476 people were informed (viewed documents and multiple pages) and 1,000 were aware of the project (visited the site). This makes the totals throughout both phases of the consultation period 548 people who engaged, 1001 people who were informed, and 2184 people who were aware.

4 Key Findings

Emails in response to draft Strategy publication

- 4.1 4 direct emails were received in response to the publication of the draft Electric Vehicle Charging strategy. 3 of these were from private individuals, and one was from the Network Development Manager (South Wales) at Sustrans Cymru.
- 4.2.1 In the email from Sustrans Cymru, the first point raised is the need to link the EV strategy to wider transport and public transport strategies as part of addressing climate change.
- 4.2.2 Accessibility is also raised by Sustrans Cymru in specific response to the draft Strategy document:

*“...how can we facilitate private charging for those people that do not have off road parking. **This must not involve the loss of footway space needed for walking.**”*

“I can see all sorts of issues with less abled people struggling to connect their vehicles to existing charging point.”

The full text of this email, and the other emails received, can be read in Appendix 1.

- 4.3 In the emails received from members of the public, the most common theme raised was cost, with the suggestion that the EV charging strategy or related strategies could include financial assistance or incentives to encourage private take-up of new technologies:
- “A commitment from the householder/business to purchase a £25,000+ vehicle should come with a commitment from RCT”*
- 4.4 One email also directly addressed the question regarding location of proposed charging facilities, suggesting the emphasis could be on destination charging rather than private or at-home charging:
- “(destination charging) will both encourage those that have difficulties charging in terraced streets by demonstrating how easy it is wherever else they go, and also relieve pressure on demand for limited on street provision at such addresses.”*
- 4.5 The issues around older, terraced housing and a lack of parking in residential areas was also a common theme in these messages.

“How do I charge my car daily when I can rarely park within 100m of my house?”

Quick Polls

- 4.6 2 web polls were set up within the Let's Talk Electric Vehicles project during Phase 1, and continued to receive responses in Phase 2.
- 4.7 Quick Poll 1 asked "To what extent do you agree with the UK Government's decision to move the ban on the sale of new petrol and diesel cars forward to 2030?" 81 people took part in this poll.

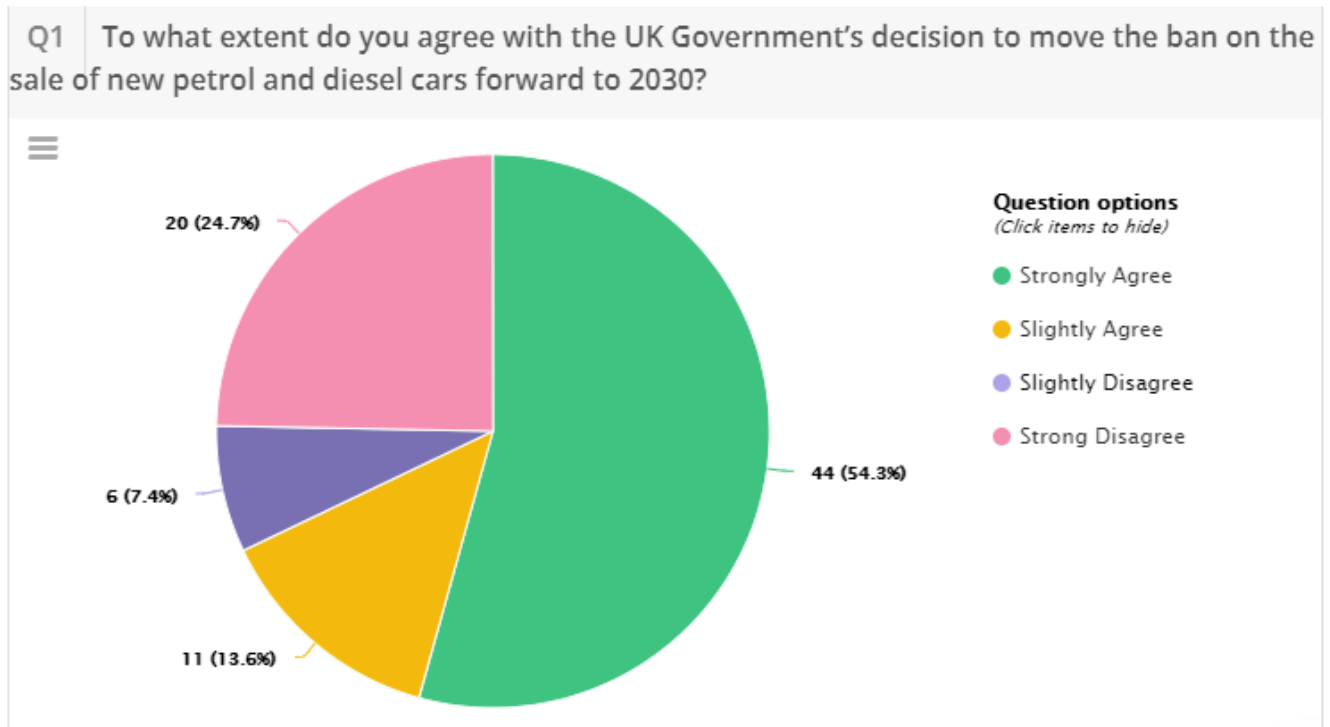


Figure 1 – Agreement with decision to bring forward ban on sale of new petrol /diesel cars.

Over 60% (67.9) of respondents either strongly agreed or slightly agreed with the decision made by UK Government to bring forward the ban on the sale of new petrol and diesel cars.

- 4.8 Quick Poll 2 asked "Do you intend to look for alternatives to driving a petrol/diesel car in the future (e.g. walking more / using public transport / taxi / cycling)?" 19 people took part in this poll.

Q1 Do you intend to look for alternatives to driving a petrol/diesel car in future (e.g. walking more / using public transport / taxi / cycling)?

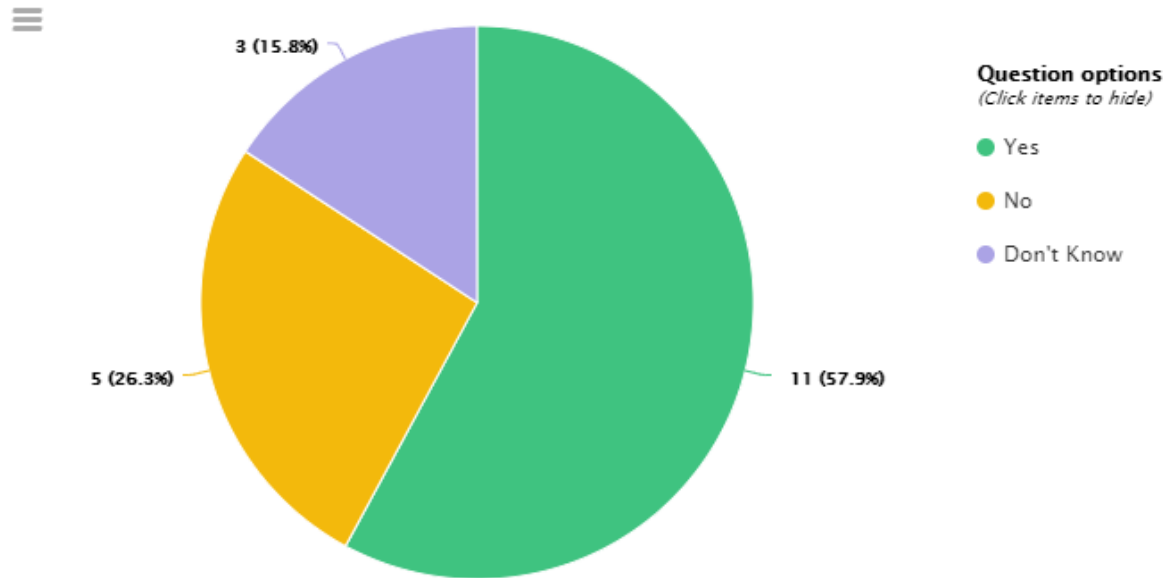


Figure 2 – Intentions to look for alternatives to driving a petrol / diesel car

57.9% of people said 'yes' they intend to look for alternatives to driving a petrol/diesel car in the future.

Places (Map tool)

4.9 An interactive map was available as part of the Let's Talk site. Users were asked to use the map to navigate around areas in RCT and 'drop pins' in public locations they felt would be suitable for an EV charging point. Users were able to leave comments explaining why they chose that location should they feel necessary.

A total of 178 individual pins were dropped by 55 users during Phase 2 of the consultation. These varied in location across the borough, with some pins being places outside the borough area.

Popular locations selected include retail parks such as Talbot Green and Pontypridd Town Centre with comments indicating charging points here would be utilised whilst shopping / eating out.

Other popular locations were near railway stations and leisure areas used for recreational exercise.

The following maps show locations at a high level for illustrative purposes.

A full list of all locations identified and suggested reasons is attached at Appendix 2.

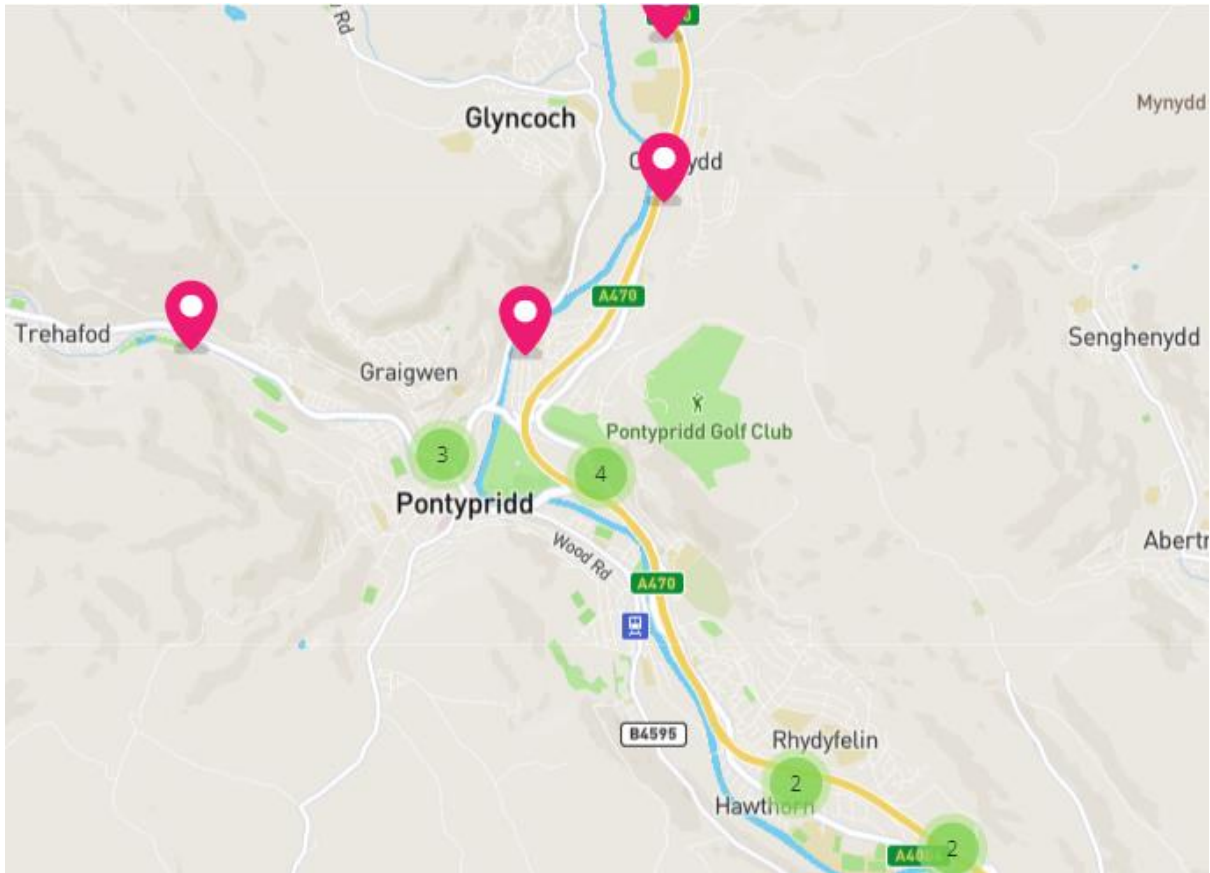


Figure 3 – Locations identified in Pontypridd area

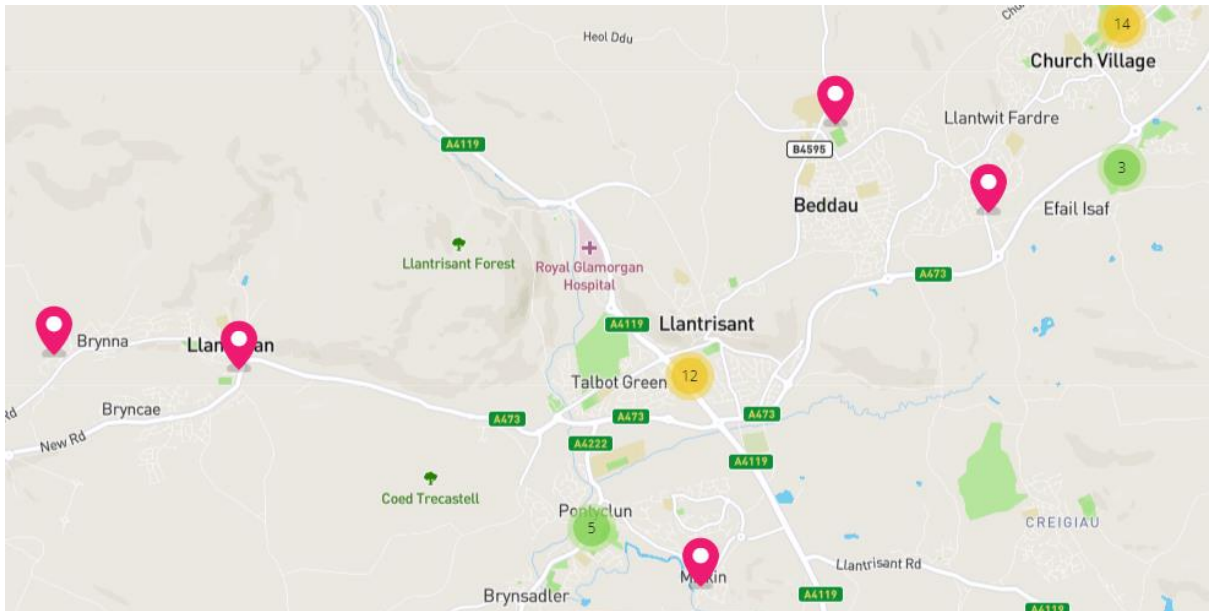


Figure 4 – Locations identified in Llanharan / Llantrisant and Church Village

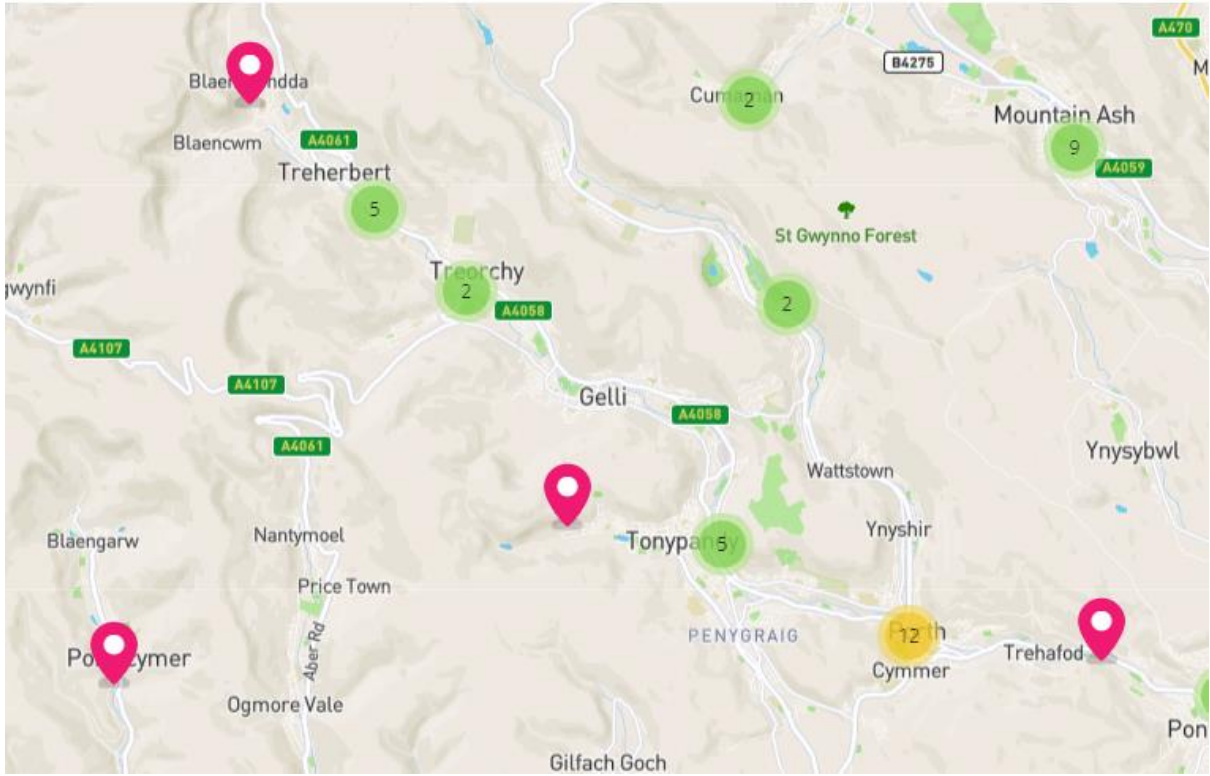


Figure 5 – Locations identified in Rhondda area

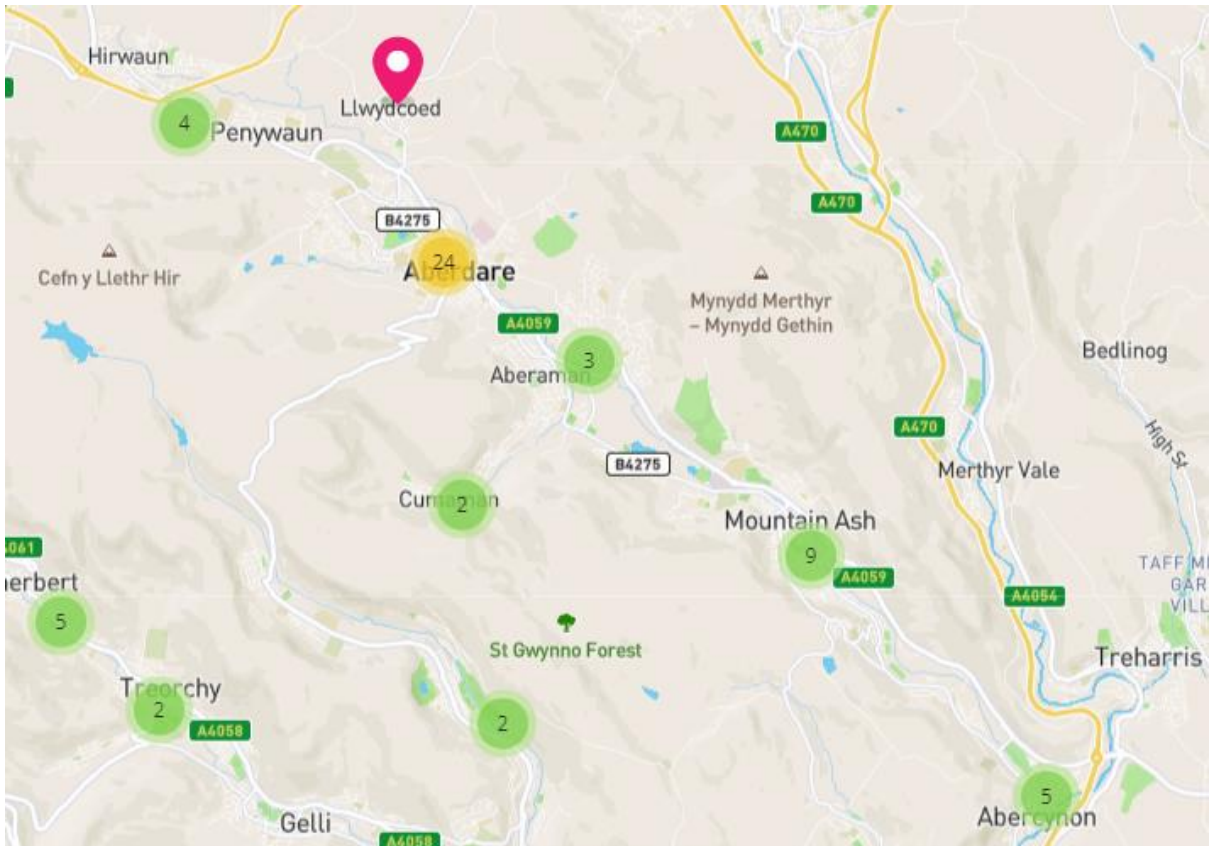


Figure 6 - Locations identified in Cynon area

Stories

- 4.10 Users were able to leave a “story” detailing their experience of owning an EV as part of the consultation online tool. A total of 4 stories were received, and are available in **Appendix 3**. None of these stories directly referenced the draft Strategy.



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