CYNGOR BWRDEISTREF SIROL
RHONDDA CYNON TAF
COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

COMMITTEE SUMMONS

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

Meeting Contact: Sarah Handy - Members Researcher & Scrutiny Officer
(07385401942)

YOU ARE SUMMONED to a meeting of **FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** to be held at the **Virtual** on **TUESDAY, 20TH JULY, 2021** at **5.00 PM.**

Non Committee Members and Members of the public may request the facility to address the Committee at their meetings on the business listed although facilitation of this request is at the discretion of the Chair. It is kindly asked that such notification is made to Democratic Services by Friday, 16 July 2021 on the contact details listed above, including stipulating whether the address will be in Welsh or English.

AGENDA	Page No's

1. **DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

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

   Note:

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

2. **MINUTES**

To receive the minutes of the previous meeting of the Finance and Performance Scrutiny Committee held on the 13th April 2021.

REPORTS OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, DEMOCRATIC SERVICES AND COMMUNICATIONS

3. CONSULTATION LINKS

Information is provided in respect of relevant consultations for consideration by the Committee.

4. FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME 2021/22

For Members of the Finance and Performance Scrutiny Committee to consider the Work Programme for the 2021/22 Municipal Year.

OFFICER REPORTS

5. REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND DIGITAL SERVICES

To consider the Quarter 4 (year-end) Council Performance Report for 2020/21

6. DRAFT TOURISM STRATEGY UPDATE

For Committee members to receive an update in respect of the Council's Draft Tourism Strategy.

7. URGENT BUSINESS

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

8. CHAIR'S REVIEW AND CLOSE

To reflect on the meeting and actions to be taken forward.

Circulation:-

The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Finance and Performance Scrutiny Committee (County Borough Councillor M Powell and County Borough Councillor G Thomas respectively)

County Borough Councillors:

Councillor S Bradwick, Councillor R Yeo, Councillor S. Rees-Owen,
Councillor J Williams, Councillor T Williams, Councillor J Cullwick,
Councillor G Caple, Councillor A Fox, Councillor H Boggis, Councillor J James,
Councillor S Evans and Councillor J Edwards

County Borough Councillor S Belzak – Ex officio Member

County Borough Councillors L.M.Adams a W Lewis – Chair & Vice Chair of Overview
& Scrutiny Committee – for information

Education Co-Opted Members – For information

Mr L Patterson, Voting Elected Parent / Governor Representative
Mr A Rickett, Voting Diocesan Authorities' Representative
Ms A Jones, Representing UNITE
Mr J Fish, Voting Elected Parent / Governor Representative
Mr M Cleverley
Mr C Jones, Representing GMB
Mr D Price, Representing UNISON
Mrs C Jones, Representing the National Union of Teachers and Teachers' Panel
Mrs R Nicholls, Voting Elected Parent / Governor Representative

Councillor G Davies – Chair, Audit Committee

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RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Minutes of the virtual meeting of the Finance and Performance Scrutiny Committee held on Tuesday, 13 April 2021 at 5.00 pm.

County Borough Councillors - Finance and Performance Scrutiny Committee Members in attendance:-

Councillor M Powell (Chair)

Councillor G Thomas	Councillor S Bradwick
Councillor R Yeo	Councillor S. Rees-Owen
Councillor T Williams	Councillor J Cullwick
Councillor G Caple	Councillor A Fox
Councillor S Evans	Councillor S Rees
Councillor J Edwards	Councillor W Owen

Officers in attendance:-

Mr P Griffiths, Service Director – Finance & Improvement Services
Mr A Wilkins, Director of Legal Services
Mr D Powell, Director of Corporate Estates
Ms W Edwards, Service Director – Community Services
Ms S Davies, Head of Finance – Education & Financial Reporting

County Borough Councillors in attendance:-

Councillor L M Adams, Chair Overview & Scrutiny Committee

47   Apology

An apology of absence was received from County Borough Councillor J Williams.

48   Minute's Silence

Members undertook a minute's silence in memory of His Royal Highness, the Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh.

49   Declaration of Interest

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

50   Minutes

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the 15th March 2021 as an accurate reflection of the meeting.

51   Consultation Links

The Chair referenced the consultation links, which were available through the 'RCT Scrutiny' website. Members were reminded that information is provided in respect of relevant consultations for consideration by the Committee, which are circulated on a monthly basis.

52   Rhondda Cynon Taf's Employment and Skills Strategy and Action Plan 2019 - 2021

The Service Director Community Services presented a Power Point presentation outlining the Employment and Skills Strategy 2019/2021 under the following headings:

- ➢ Where we were/where do we want to be/How do we get there?
- ➢ Delivering on Priorities
- ➢ Provision
- ➢ Delivery During Lockdown
- ➢ Support for Employers
- ➢ Impact of Provision on Customers
- ➢ Looking Ahead – Challenges
- ➢ Impact of COVID-19 on Employment
- ➢ Looking Ahead – Opportunities

The presentation was accompanied by a video which demonstrated how a Communities for Work participant received the appropriate support to work in the care sector and how this support was provided.

Following the presentation, the Service Director responded to a number of queries regarding the impact of Covid-19 on the level of support provided to enable young people to access and retain jobs in the county borough and beyond. The Service Director explained that the Council's Youth Engagement and Participation Service has targeted support and youth work provision over the last twelve months as the impact of Covid-19 on this age group has been significant. The Council provide a range of employment schemes and promote its Graduate and Apprenticeship Schemes which offer a wealth of opportunities to young people to gain and retain employment with the local authority. In addition, schemes such as the DWP Kickstart programme are available for 16-24-year olds. The Service Director advised that collaboration between the ten South East Wales Regions will provide joint support and opportunities for joint funding applications such as to the Shared Prosperity Fund which focuses on increasing productivity, inclusive and sustainable growth, economic development and employment/skills support.

A discussion ensued regarding the support available to those on the shielding list during the pandemic, the Service Director Community Services provided an update on the means by which residents who were shielding were approached and contacted with offers of support based on information supplied by the Health Board. Many personal accounts of the process were relayed, and Members sought clarification as to whether there would be a review in the future highlighting the mechanisms that worked well and lessons learned. The Service Director reported that the Community Support Steering Group had already undertaken some work which has identified key issues and challenges in this area through its partnerships, which could form the basis of a report to a future meeting.

The Service Director advised that there are a number of considerations for Adult Community Services in conjunction with its partners going forward such as pathways into other employment provisions that meet a green economy and technological advances in addition to changes in the labour market and employment that requires a higher level of skills set.

Committee requested further information be circulated following the meeting in respect of the numbers of Graduates that acquire and sustain employment with the local authority and beyond and the estimated ESF Grant Value for 2021-22.

Following further discussions, it was **RESOLVED** to note the information contained within the presentation.

53   **To consider the report of the Director of Finance & Digital Services.**

The Service Director, Performance and Improvement presented Members with the Quarter 3 Council Performance Report to the 31st December 2020.

The report included information in respect of revenue and capital budget performance; Treasury Management prudential indicators; Organisational Health information including staff turnover, sickness and Council strategic risks; and Corporate Plan priority action plan updates (including investment updates).

The Service Director provided the Committee with an overview of the key information included within the report in respect of financial data and progress against the Council's Corporate Plan priorities as well as signposts to other reports presented to other Committees during the period. Committee was referred to the Executive Summary which provided information relating to the Revenue Budget Performance, projected as £1.049M overspend at Quarter 3. The Committee was advised of the full year projection of additional costs and income losses associated with Covid 19 and the monthly claim process via the Welsh Government Hardship Fund to ensure the Council reclaims all eligible additional costs and income losses.

The Service Director advised of some of the key areas within the subsequent sections of the report such as key pressures continuing for demand led services particularly Adult Social Care and Children Services. He also reported that work is ongoing across all service areas to contribute to bringing the Council's overall financial position closer in line with budget at year-end.

The Service Director provided a summary of Capital Programme investment at Quarter 3, this being £57M against a total budget for the year of £108M and representing a 53% completion rate that is broadly comparable with the same period in the previous financial year. The Service Director advised on some key areas of investment such as Llys Cadwyn and Coedely Business Unit which focus on regeneration, continued investment in infrastructure through highways and structural improvements, support for vulnerable clients via the provision of disabled facilities grants and on-going investment in schools across the County Borough. He added that a number of new grant approvals have also been incorporated into the Capital Programme at quarter 3.

The Service Director reported that the Council's sickness absence percentage,

which excludes Covid related absences such as the requirement to self-isolate or being part of the shielded list, is 3.84% which represents an improved position overall from the previous year. He added that the Council continues to provide specific support to areas such as Adult Social Care, to assist service areas and staff through an unprecedented period.

The Service Director advised that Section 4 of the Executive Summary sets out the Council's updated Strategic Risk Register. He confirmed that Risk 25, which relates to the impact of Covid-19, has been updated to include reference to the financial implications of the pandemic, as requested by the Committee as part of its scrutiny of the Council's quarter 2 Performance Report.

The Service Director went on to provide an overview of Section 5 of the Executive Summary that covers the Council's Corporate Plan priority action plan progress updates. He explained that the purpose of the overview of progress for each priority area included within the Executive Summary is to provide a balanced picture of progress, within the context of the unprecedented circumstances which Council's services continue to operate. He added that each priority area also contains investment priority progress updates across 28 areas and representing additional investment of over £55Million.

In conclusion, the Service Director advised that the first progress update of the Council's response to the extreme weather events is included in the quarter 3 report, as agreed by Cabinet on the 18th December 2020, with further updates to be considered by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee in due course.

In response to a number of queries raised, the Service Director provided clarification on budget variances within Adult Services in respect of Long-term Care & Support and Short-term Intervention Services.

Further clarification was also provided regarding the overspend in Children's Services, this being primarily as a result of an increase in demand for residential care to accommodate children looked after and the complexities of specific packages of care. The Service Director confirmed that additional information relating to the following areas would be provided to Committee following discussion with the relevant service areas:

> Investment in town centres, specifically around levering in private sector investment for projects in Porth; and
> Delayed Transfer of Care - the key stages of the process before hospital discharge with an appropriate care package in place.

Following consideration of the report it was **RESOLVED** to acknowledge the Council's financial and operational performance position as at 31st December 2020 (Quarter 3).

54   2021/22 CAPITAL STRATEGY REPORT AND 2021/22 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY REPORT

The report of the Service Director Democratic Services & Communications introduced the 2021/22 Capital Strategy Report and 2021/22 Treasury Management Strategy Report, which were approved by Council on the 10th March 2021, and provided the opportunity for Members to scrutinise the reports in line with the Terms of Reference of the Committee

The Head of Finance, Education and Financial Reporting provided background information to both reports indicating that the Capital Strategy had been prepared in line with the Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities and the Treasury Management Report in line with the Local Government Act 2003, the CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice and the CIPFA Prudential Code.

The Head of Finance, Education and Financial Reporting went on to provide an overview of both reports.

For the Capital Strategy Report, the Head of Finance advised that the purpose of the report is to provide a high level overview of how capital expenditure, capital financing and treasury management activity contribute to the provision of services along with an overview of risk, its management and the implications for future financial sustainability. The Head of Finance referred Members to specific information within the report including the 3-year capital programme (2021/22 and 2023/24), approved by full Council on 10th March 2021, of just over £116M. Of this investment, £33M is funded by borrowing, the remainder being funded by other sources such as grants, capital receipts, third party contributions or revenue contributions.

It was reported that the Council compiles with the Prudential Code when setting the Capital Programme in line with the requirement for plans to be affordable, sustainable and prudent. The Head of Finance referred to the Prudential Code Indicators that the Council is required to agree at the start of the year, as set out in the report, and confirmed that performance updates will be reported to Council and the Finance and Performance Scrutiny Committee in a mid-year and year-end reports and also as part of the Council's quarterly Performance Reporting arrangements. The Head of Finance added that a new sub-section had been included within the report around the Council's high-level approach and appetite in respect of commercialisation opportunities.

The Head of Finance, Education and Financial Reporting then presented the Treasury Management Strategy which set out the Council's Investment Strategy, Treasury Indicators for 2021/22 and Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement.

In presenting the Strategy, Committee was advised that in November 2020 the HM Treasury, after considering responses to its consultation of future lending terms, reduced the rates of the Public Works Loans Board (PWLB) by 1%, thereby reversing the previous increase in October 2019 which has enabled improved affordability for capital programmes. The Head of Finance went on to indicate that the Council's borrowing requirement to fund the 2021/22 capital programme is currently £19.3M and also reminded Members of the Council's continued strategy to maximise internal borrowing, run down cash balances and foregoing interest earned at historically low rates.

The Head of Finance, Education and Financial Reporting explained that PWLB loans are no longer available to Councils planning to buy investment assets primarily for yield or solely for exploiting commercialisation opportunities. The Head of Finance added that the Council's policy on Treasury Management is to prioritise security and liquidity over return and to focus on minimising risk rather than maximising return, with cash investments continuing to be held with other public sector bodies or the UK Government's Debt Management Office. The

Head of Finance, Education and Financial Reporting also advised that this approach is supplemented by approved lending to organisations where appropriate due diligence is undertaken and security arrangements put in place, and currently £6.65M is invested in such arrangements as at 1st April 2021.

In conclusion, the Head of Finance, Education and Financial Reporting drew Members attention to the Policy Statement approved by Council on Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) and explained that in line with the Local Government Act 2003 there is a requirement to charge an amount to revenue each year in respect of capital expenditure, with this charge being known as Minimum Revenue Provision.

Following consideration of the report it was **RESOLVED** to acknowledge the information contained within the report as set out below:

Appendix 1:
2021/22 Capital Strategy Report incorporating Prudential Indicators.

Appendix 2:
Treasury Management Strategy incorporating Investment Strategy, Treasury Management Indicators and Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement for 2021/22.

55   To consider passing the following resolution:-

RESOLVED – "That the press and public be excluded from the meeting under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 14 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A of the Act".

56   Corporate Asset Management Plan

The Director of Corporate Services presented his report which set out progress against the key themes of the Corporate Asset Management Plan 2018/23.

Following consideration of the plan which provides a coordinated strategic approach to the management of the Council's property assets to deliver benefits to the Council, it was **RESOLVED** to acknowledge the content of the report.

57   Chair's Review and Close

The Chair reminded members that any requested information would be circulated in due course via the Scrutiny Support Officer.

As this was the last meeting of the Finance & Performance Scrutiny Committee for the 2020/21 Municipal Year, the Chair extended his thanks to Lead Officers and members of the Committee particularly to his Vice Chair, Councillor G Thomas for his support and guidance.

This meeting closed at 7.32 pm

CLLR M. POWELL
CHAIR.

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RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2021 /22

FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

20th July 2021

FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE 2021/22 MUNICIPAL YEAR

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR DEMOCRATIC SERVICES & COMMUNICATIONS

1. **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1   The purpose of this report is to seek Members' comment and approval on the draft Work Programme of the Finance and Performance Scrutiny Committee for the 2021/22 Municipal Year.

2**.** **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that Members of the Finance and Performance Scrutiny Committee:

2.1   Agree on issues for inclusion on the Finance and Performance Scrutiny Committee's Work Programme for the 2021/22 Municipal Year (as set out in **Appendix 1**); and,

2.2   Consider and determine any other matters that Members may wish to scrutinise over this period.

3**.** **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

3.1   There is a requirement to devise and publish a Work Programme for each of the Council's Scrutiny Committees as set out in Part 4 of the Constitution (Overview & Scrutiny Procedure Rules).

3.2   In consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Finance and Performance Scrutiny Committee together with appropriate Council Officers and the relevant Cabinet Members, through the one-to-one engagement sessions, an initial list of work topics for the Finance and Performance Scrutiny Committee has been produced and is attached at Appendix 1.

4.   **BACKGROUND**

4.1   As Members will recall, the Scrutiny Work Programmes have a reduced number of meetings for this Municipal Year to allow for the work to be timetabled with the best use of resources available. This will allow for a more flexible approach to recognise the needs of emerging priorities and provides opportunity for Scrutiny Working Groups to be taken forward and training provision where requested.

4.2   The work programme should reflect the committee's aims and objectives as well as add value to the work of the Council. It is up to the Committee to agree the items for inclusion in its work programme, but ideas are brought together from a number of sources to assist members in their choices. It is important that all Members have the opportunity to put forward items for consideration.

4.3   Recently, 1-1 Engagement sessions have been undertaken to provide an opportunity for the respective Cabinet Members, Scrutiny Chairs and Vice Chairs and Scrutiny lead Officers to discuss their respective work programmes, identify any key topics for inclusion and enhance dialogue and the flow of information between Cabinet and Scrutiny.

4.4   There are a number of areas which will be revisited in 2021/22 where work was commenced during the previous municipal year or where strands of work are ongoing.

4.5   Other principles which have been taken into account:

   ➤ The work programme represents a mixed selection of topics;
   ➤ It meets deadlines in relation to other Council meetings and those of external partners;
   ➤ Consideration as to whether the topic duplicates review activity which is taking place elsewhere; and
   ➤ Flexibiltiy- to ensure that new topics can be factored in and changes accounted for.

5.   EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

5.1   An Equality Impact Assessment is not needed because the contents of the report are for information purposes only and further analysis of each of the Work Programme will be needed if the recommendations are to be taken forward.

6.   CONSULTATION

6.1   The draft Work Programme has been compiled in discussion with the Chairs and Vice Chairs of the Finance and Performance Scrutiny Committees in consultation with Council Officers as well as the relevant Cabinet Members.

7.   FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1   There are no financial implications aligned to this report.

8.   LEGAL IMPLICATIONS AND LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

8.1   The report has been prepared in accordance with paragraph Part 4 of the Constitution (Overview & Scrutiny Procedure Rules).

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 1972

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

20th JULY 2021

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR DEMOCRATIC SERVICES & COMMUNICATIONS

Contact Officer: Sarah Handy, Members Researcher & Scrutiny Officer

APPENDIX 1:

FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME 2021/22

APPENDIX 1

SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMMES 2021/22
FINANCE & PERFORMANCE

'Holding the Executive to account in respect of all three priorities within the Council's Corporate Plan…. People (Ensuring People are independent, healthy and successful), Places (Creating Places where people are proud to live, work and play) and Prosperity (Enabling Prosperity creating the opportunity for people and businesses to: be innovative; be entrepreneurial; and fulfil their potential and prosper) as well as its key principle 'Living within our Means'.

Each of the Council's Scrutiny Committees is responsible for setting and agreeing its own work programme by identifying a list of themes and topics which fall under the remit of each individual Scrutiny Committee. Following discussion with the Chair, Vice Chair and Scrutiny Members a practical, realistic and timetabled programme can then be developed.

The scrutiny forward work programmes should provide a clear rationale as to why particular issues have been selected; be outcome focussed; ensure that the method of scrutiny is best suited to the topic area and the outcome desired; align scrutiny programmes with the Council's performance management and improvement arrangements.

Throughout the year, there are a number of ways in which additional issues can be considered for inclusion in the Scrutiny Work Programme and ideas for inclusion may come from a number of sources such as:-

- Individual Councillors;
- Performance or budget monitoring information;
- Inspection reports;
- Referrals from Council (such as Notices of Motion), Cabinet/Audit or other scrutiny committees;
- Service users;
- Monitoring the implementation of recommendations previously made by the Committee; and
- Local Residents.

The Cabinet is also required to produce forward work programmes and the Overview & Scrutiny Committee keeps abreast of forthcoming items or topics which may enable scrutiny to be involved in the development of Council policy prior to its formal consideration by Cabinet. It is important to bear in mind that an element of flexibility is applied to each individual work programme that provides Committees with the capacity to scrutinise new / urgent issues that arise during the year.

Date/Time	Overarching Item	Officer	Cabinet Member	Scrutiny Focus
Tuesday, 20th July 2021, 5pm	2021/22 Work Programme	Service Director, Communications & Democratic Services	Councillor Norris, Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Councillor Bevan, Cabinet Member For Enterprise Development and Housing	**Scrutiny & Challenge –** For Committee Members to consider the work programme for the 2021/22 Municipal year.
	Quarter 4 Performance Report	Service Director – Finance & Improvement Services	Councillor Norris, Cabinet Member for Corporate Services	For Committee Members to consider the Council's Quarter 4 Performance Report (2020/21)
	Draft Tourism Strategy Update	Director of Prosperity and Development	Councillor Bevan, Cabinet Member For Enterprise Development and Housing	For Committee members to receive an update in respect of the Council's Tourism Strategy.
Wednesday, 8th September 2021, 5pm	Treasury Management Training	External Provider – AirlingClose	Councillor Norris, Cabinet Member for Corporate Services	To receive an overview of Treasury Management, delivered by Arlingclose (the Council's Treasury Management Advisors), to assist Members in undertaking their role

	Treasury Management Annual Report	Head of Finance: Education & Financial Reporting	Councillor Norris, Cabinet Member for Corporate Services	For Committee Members to consider the Council's Treasury Management Annual Report 2020/21
	Understanding the Council's Budget	Service Director – Finance and Improvement Services	Councillor Norris, Cabinet Member for Corporate Services	To provide Committee Members with an overview of the Council's 2021/22 Revenue Budget and 3-year Capital Programme (2021/22 to 2023/24)
	Community Infrastructure Levy Annual Monitoring Report	Director of Prosperity and Development	Councillor R Bevan Cabinet Member for Enterprise Development and Housing	Scrutiny will undertake pre scrutiny of the Community Infrastructure Levy Annual Monitoring Report
Thursday, 21 October 2021, 5pm	Quarter 1 Performance Report	Service Director – Finance & Improvement Services	Councillor Norris, Cabinet Member for Corporate Services	For Committee Members to consider the Council's Quarter 1 Performance Report (2021/22)
	Engagement on the Council's Budget	Service Director, Communications & Democratic Services	Councillor Norris, Cabinet Member for Corporate Services	To receive an overview of the Council's approach to the 2022/23 Budget Consultation Process
	Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2021/22 to 2024/25	Service Director – Finance & Improvement Services	Councillor Norris, Cabinet Member for Corporate Services	For Committee Members to consider the Council's MTFP 2021/22 to 2024/25 (in preparation for the Committee to provide feedback, as a consultee of the Council's Budget Consultation process, at a future meeting(s) during the year)

	Corporate Asset Management Plan (*INFORMATION ONLY*) (*Exempt Item*)	Director of Corporate Estates	Councillor Norris, Cabinet Member for Corporate Services	For Committee Members to consider an interim update of the Corporate Asset Management Plan
	Regeneration Grants	Director of Prosperity and Development	Councillor Norris, Cabinet Member for Corporate Services	For Members to scrutinise the impact of the refocus and review of the Regeneration Business Grants.
Tuesday, 30 November 2021, 5pm	Budget Consultation 2022/23 (Phase 1)	Service Director – Finance & Improvement Services	Councillor Norris, Cabinet Member for Corporate Services	For Committee Members to feedback their views as part of phase 1 of the 2022/23 Budget Consultation Process
	Quarter 2 Performance Report	Service Director – Finance & Improvement Services	Councillor Norris, Cabinet Member for Corporate Services	For Committee Members to consider the Council's Quarter 2 Performance Report (2021/22)
Wednesday, 2nd February 2022, 5pm	Budget Consultation 2022/23 (Phase 2)	Service Director – Finance & Improvement Services	Councillor Norris, Cabinet Member for Corporate Services	To undertake pre-scrutiny of the draft 2022/23 Budget Strategy agreed by Cabinet
	2021/22 Mid-Year Treasury Management Stewardship Report	Head of Finance: Education & Financial Reporting	Councillor Norris, Cabinet Member for Corporate Services	To consider the 2021/22 Mid-Year Treasury Management Stewardship Report
	Rhondda Cynon Taf's 'Kickstart Programme' Update	Service Director – Community Services	Councillor R Bevan Cabinet Member for Enterprise Development and Housing	For Committee members to receive an update in respect of the Council's 'Kickstart Programme'.

Thursday, 17th March 2022, 5pm	Quarter 3 Performance Report	Service Director – Finance & Improvement Services	Councillor Norris, Cabinet Member for Corporate Services	For Committee Members to consider the Council's Quarter 3 Performance Report (2021/22)
	Town Centre Strategy Update	Director of Prosperity and Development	Councillor R Bevan Cabinet Member for Enterprise Development and Housing	For Committee Members to receive an update in respect of Town Centres across the County Borough.

Training Requirements:-

- Treasury Management Training – Airlingclose

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RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2021/22

FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM 5
20th July 2021	COUNCIL PERFORMANCE REPORT – 31st MARCH 2021 QUARTER 4

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES AND COMMUNICATION

1. **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

    To introduce the Quarter 4 Council Performance Report (to 31st March 2021).

2. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

    It is recommended that Members:

2.1 Scrutinise the Council's financial and operational performance position as at 31st March 2021 (Quarter 4).

2.2 Consider whether they wish to scrutinise in greater depth any matters contained in the report in line with the Terms of Reference of the Committee.

3. **QUARTER 4 PERFORMANCE REPORT**

3.1 The Council's Quarter 4 Performance Report (to 31st March 2021) was presented to the Cabinet meeting of the 20th July 2021 and is replicated for the Finance and Performance Scrutiny Committee's review at **Appendix 1.**

3.2 The report contains revenue and capital budget performance; Treasury Management prudential indicators; Organisational Health information including staff turnover, sickness and Council strategic risks; and Corporate Plan priority action plan updates (including investment updates).

3.3 In addition, Table 1 signposts a selection of other reports presented to Committees during Quarter 4 with the aim of providing Members with as full a picture as possible of business activity during the period in relation to the Council's Corporate Plan priority areas. Members will note that the information included in Table 1 is not an exhaustive list.

Table 1 – Other reports presented during Quarter 4

Council Wide		

Date of meeting	Committee	Report
15-Mar	Finance & Performance Scrutiny Committee	ICT & Digital: Improving, Delivering & Supporting Services over last 12 months
17-Mar	Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Annual Equalities Report 2019/20
25 Mar	Cabinet	The Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021
		Non-Domestic Rate (NDR) Relief Scheme for Retail, Leisure and Hospitality
		Pre-Scrutiny – Annual Equality Report 2019/2020
		The Socio-Economic Duty (Equality Act 2010)

Corporate Plan Priority - PEOPLE		
Date of meeting	**Committee**	**Report**
14-Jan	Cabinet	Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report 2019/20
		National Adoption Service Wales Annual Report 2019-2020
13-Jan	Children & Young People's Scrutiny Committee	Kinship Report
18-Jan	Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Customer Feedback Scheme – Comments, Compliments and Complaints Annual Report 2019/20
25-Jan	Corporate Parenting Board	Vale, Valleys and Cardiff Regional Adoption Collaborative Annual Report 2019/20 also 13 Jan Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee
		Children Looked After (CLA) Education Outcomes
		Tros Gynnal Plant (Tgp) Cymru Update
		Cwm Taf Regional Fostering Front Door
		Independent Reviewing Service Monitoring Report
03-Feb	Children & Young People's Scrutiny Committee	Young Carers Annual Report
		Cwm Taf Youth Offending Service
		Cwm Taf Morgannwg CAMHS Update 2020/2021
08-Feb	Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee	Adult Services: Covid-19 Response and Summary of the Support Offered to Adult Carers in Rhondda Cynon Taf
23-Feb	Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Local Authority Arrangements to Safeguard Children and Adults at Risk
25-Feb	Cabinet	Regional Adoption Collaboration Annual Report 2019-2020
22-Mar	Corporate Parenting Board	Fostering Service Quality of Care Report 2019/20

Corporate Plan Priority - PLACES		
Date of meeting	**Committee**	**Report**
12-Jan	Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee	A Review of the Service Level Agreement with Hope Rescue
		Public Protection Services- Covid-19 Response
14-Jan	Cabinet	Bus Emergency Scheme (BES) – Request to all Councils to Sign-up to BES 2 Scheme

Date of meeting	Committee	Report
14-Jan	Public Service Delivery, Communities & Prosperity Scrutiny Committee	Report on the Impact of Covid 19 on Community Recycling Centres
		Report on Bryn Pica Eco Park
28-Jan	Cabinet	Recommendations of the Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group
03-Feb	Children & Young People's Scrutiny Committee	Cwm Taf Youth Offending Service
11-Feb	Public Service Delivery, Communities & Prosperity Scrutiny Committee	Report on the Impact of Covid 19 on Parks and Countryside Operations in 2020/2021
25-Feb	Cabinet	Corporate Asset Management Plan 2018/23: Interim Update
16-Mar	Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee	A report on the progress of the Integrated Substance Misuse Service in Rhondda Cynon Taf and Merthyr Tydfil
		Progress with the Homelessness Strategy 2018-2022
17-Mar	Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group	Draft Council Tackling Climate Change Strategy 2021-2025 for Public Consultation
17-Mar	Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group	Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure: Driving Change
25-Mar	Cabinet	
18-Mar	Public Service Delivery, Communities & Prosperity Scrutiny Committee	Streetcare Enforcement Update
		South Wales Parking Group (SWPG) Update

Corporate Plan Priority - PROSPERITY		
Date of meeting	**Committee**	**Report**
11-Jan	Strategic Culture & Arts Steering Group	An Update on the Progress of the RCT Arts Services in Serving Our Communities During the Covid-19 Pandemic 2020
28-Jan	Cabinet	21st Century Schools Programme – Proposals To Improve Education Provision For Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Llyn-Y-Forwyn
		Welsh In Education Strategic Plan – Annual Update 2020
27-Jan	Children & Young People's Scrutiny Committee	Movement of Pupils in Welsh Medium Schools
		Update of Education's Latest Position in Response to Covid-19
		Welsh in Education Strategic Plan – Annual Update 2020
		Eye to Eye Counselling
23-Feb	Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Cardiff Capital Region City Deal
24-Feb	Children & Young People's Scrutiny Committee	The Work of the Central South Consortium in the Region and Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Authority April 2019 - September 2020
		Update Position of RCT Childcare Sector
25-Feb	Cabinet	The Cardiff Capital Region City Deal – Five Years On
		Community Infrastructure Levy "Cil" Consultation Responses
		21st Century Schools Programme – Update on the Proposals to Improve Education Provision in the Cynon Valley
		Review of Special School Provision In Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
		Update on the Implementation of the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal Act (2018) in Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
26-Feb	Cardiff Capital Region City Deal Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Forward Work Programme and papers
24-Mar	Children & Young People's Scrutiny Committee	Update on the Implementation of the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal Act (2018)
		School Admissions
		School Attendance

Date of meeting	Committee	Report
25-Mar	Cabinet	A Proposal to Deliver Shared Regional Education Advisory Services for Children and Young People with a Sensory Impairment
		Childcare Sufficiency Assessment Update 2021

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

20th July 2021

COUNCIL PERFORMANCE REPORT – 31st March 2021 (Quarter 4)

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES AND COMMUNICATION

Item: 5

Background Papers

None.

Officer to contact: Paul Griffiths

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RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

20th July 2021

COUNCIL PERFORMANCE REPORT – 31st March 2021 (Year End/Quarter 4)

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, for the financial year ended 31st March 2021.

2.0   RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

2.1   Note the continued unprecedented circumstances Council Services are operating within as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Revenue

2.2   Note and agree the General Fund revenue outturn position of the Council as at the 31st March 2021 (Section 2 of the Executive Summary) including the additional one-off Welsh Government Covid-19 funding accounted for during the year to support service delivery.

Capital

2.3   Note the capital outturn position of the Council as at the 31st March 2021 (Sections 3a – e of the Executive Summary).

2.4   Note the details of the Treasury Management Prudential Indicators as at the 31st March 2021 (Section 3f of the Executive Summary).

Corporate Plan Priorities

2.5 Note the year-end position regarding progress made against agreed 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 31st March 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 a year-end statement of the Council's financial and operational performance position for the financial year ending the 31st March 2021.

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 and progress against our Corporate Plan priorities, and exceptions are highlighted within the detailed sections to ensure that elected Members and other readers are able to quickly identify the key issues. The report also sets out a position statement of progress in implementing the recommendations agreed by Cabinet on the 18th December 2020 to enhance the Council's short term and long-term response to extreme weather events.

4.3 As Members will be aware from Performance Reports presented during 2020/21, the Covid-19 pandemic has caused unprecedented and widespread challenges in the delivery of Council Services alongside significant additional cost and income losses that have, to date, been funded in the majority of cases by Welsh Government. The fourth quarter Performance Report continues to be set within this context and further information in this regard is included within the Executive Summary.

5.0 QUARTER 4 REPORT

5.1 The Quarter 4 report is attached and comprises:

- **Executive Summary** – setting out, at a glance, the overall performance of the Council as at Quarter 4 (i.e. 31st March 2021).

- **Revenue Monitoring** – sections 2a – e setting out the detailed year-end financial spend against budget across our Revenue Budget with exceptions highlighted.

- **Capital Monitoring** – sections 3a – e setting out year-end capital spend across our Capital Programme with exceptions highlighted and section 3f covering Prudential Indicators.

- **Organisational Health** – includes year-end 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 year-end position statements 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 sets out the year-end position on financial and operational performance for 2020/21; 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 more detail. 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 4 2020/21, that is, 31st March 2021.

11.2 The year-end revenue budget position is a £0.204M overspend and represents an improved position to that reported for quarters 1 to 3 of 2020/21. The position is set in the unprecedented context of Covid-19 and takes account of additional one-off Welsh Government funding claimed during the year, and also reflects the continuation of key budget pressures particularly across Adult Services and Children's Services. It will be critically important that additional Welsh Government funding to address 'core' cost pressures remains in place for 2021/22 and beyond, for example, across social care services, together with additional Covid-19 funding to fund additional expenditure and income losses as a direct result of the pandemic.

11.3 Capital investment as at 31st March 2021 is £102M, supporting visible improvements to infrastructure and assets, taking account of Covid-19 restrictions and safety requirements.

11.4 Good progress was made overall across the Council's three Corporate Plan priorities of People, Places and Prosperity, where focus was afforded on providing essential support to residents and businesses to help counter the significant impact of Covid-19 alongside the continued delivery of strategic projects.

11.5 The second progress update on the delivery of recommendations to enhance the Council's response to extreme weather events shows a positive position, with key actions being taken forward that provide a clear direction for the future.

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

20th July 2021

COUNCIL PERFORMANCE REPORT – 31st March 2021 (Quarter 4/Year End)

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

Item: 11

Background Papers

Officer to contact: Paul Griffiths

| COUNCIL PERFORMANCE REPORT |
| QUARTER 4 2020/21 |
| 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 4 (year-end) 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

The in-year quarterly Performance Reports during the year have set out the context Council services were operating within further to the introduction of national lockdown measures in March 2020 as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

This Executive Summary, bringing together and summarising the Council's financial and operational performance position as at 31st March 2021 (year-end), continues to be set within the context of Council service delivery operating within a very challenging and unprecedented environment as a result of the on-going impact of Covid-19. 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 will 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	2020/21 – as at 31st March 2021		
	Full Year Budget £M	Full Year Expenditure £M	Variance Over / (Under) £M
Education & Inclusion Services (2a)	191.845	191.767	(0.078)
Community & Children's Services (2b)	159.852	160.351	0.499
Chief Executive (2c)	30.644	30.236	(0.408)
Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services (2d)	55.167	55.510	0.343
Sub Total	**437.508**	**437.864**	**0.356**
Authority Wide Budgets (2e)	71.239	71.087	(0.152)
Grand Total	**508.747**	**508.951**	**0.204**

Welsh Government Covid-19 funding incorporated within the full year position at Quarter 4 (31st March 2021)

The full year revenue budget position as at 31st March 2021 is a £0.204M overspend. This position is based on additional costs and income losses incurred as a direct result of the pandemic being offset by additional funding made available by Welsh Government to all local authorities in Wales.

With regard to the Welsh Government funding made available, specific financial assistance has been provided to local authorities for additional expenditure incurred as a result of Covid-19 (for example, additional costs incurred in respect of housing / homelessness, free school meal payments, Adult Social Services, staff cover due to absence / shielding and increased demand for the Council Tax Reduction Scheme) and also income loss where there has been a need to temporarily suspend or reduce service provision (for example, Leisure Centres and the provision of school meals). Welsh Government also provided additional funding toward the end of the year as part of supporting local authorities in their on-going recovery from the pandemic, for example, to support financial resilience, the delivery of on-going projects such as digitisation of services, to support council tax collection rates and additional resources for schools. These resources have been allocated for specific purposes and are included, as appropriate, within the Council's earmarked reserve balances as at 31st March 2021 (draft, subject to audit).

The Table below sets out the total full-year additional costs and income losses incurred and accounted for relating to the 2020/21 financial year.

Full Year Additional Costs And Income Losses Incurred As A Direct Result Of Covid 19 And Assumed To Be Fully Funded By Welsh Government

Service Area	Actual Additional Costs / Income Loss Recovered (Quarters 1 - 4)*
	£M
Education & Inclusion Services	-14.720
Community & Children's Services	-22.890
Chief Executive	-1.922
Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services	-6.156
Authority Wide	-5.305
TOTAL	**-50.993**

* Excludes additional costs incurred / projected in respect of Test, Trace and Protect, the funding for which is being made available by Welsh Government. Also excludes spend incurred and funded on Welsh Government schemes which the Council acted as an agent.

Revenue budget variances at Quarter 4 (year-end)

1. <u>Community and Children's Services</u>

   ADULT SERVICES
   - Long Term Care & Support (£0.519M overspend);
   - Commissioned Services (£0.529M overspend);
   - Provider Services (£0.354M overspend); and
   - Short Term Intervention Services (£0.898M underspend).

   CHILDREN SERVICES
   - Safeguarding & Support (including Children Looked After) (£2.464M overspend);
   - Early Intervention (£0.565M underspend);
   - Cwm Taf Youth Offending Service (£0.242M underspend);
   - Intensive Intervention (£0.974M underspend); and
   - Management & Support Services (£0.057M underspend).

   TRANSFORMATION
   - Service Improvement (£0.076M underspend).

   PUBLIC HEALTH AND PROTECTION
   - Community Services (£0.247M underspend);
   - Communities & Wellbeing (£0.073M underspend); and
   - Leisure, Parks & Countryside and Community Facilities (£0.153M underspend).

2. <u>Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services</u>

   FRONTLINE SERVICES
   - Transportation (£0.184M underspend);
   - Facilities Cleaning (£0.118M underspend);
   - Waste Services (£0.602M overspend);
   - Fleet Management (£0.140M underspend); and
   - Group Directorate (£0.068M overspend).

3. <u>Chief Executive</u>

   CHIEF EXECUTIVE
   - Human Resources (£0.134M underspend);
   - Legal Services (£0.081M underspend);
   - Finance & Digital Services (£0.064M underspend); and
   - Corporate Estates (£0.079M underspend).

4. <u>Authority Wide Budgets</u>

   - Capital Financing (£0.250M underspend); and.
   - Miscellaneous (£0.094M overspend).

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 build on the work undertaken during quarters 1 to 3 to ensure safe working arrangements and, in doing so, enabled the on-going delivery of capital programme projects.

Capital Programme Budget

Service Area	2020/21 - as at 31st March 2021 Actual Expenditure £M
Chief Executive (3a)	2.495
Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services (3b)	73.610
Education & Inclusion Services (3c)	20.992
Community & Children's Services (3d)	5.223
Total	**102.320**

Key Capital Variances at Quarter 4

- 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) Targeted Regeneration Investment (TR) Programme (£0.254); Valleys Regional Park Discovery Gateways Capital Grant (£0.372M); WG Valleys Taskforce Regional (£0.280M); WG Local Transport Fund (£7.104M); WG Active Travel Fund (£2.670M); WG Active Travel Fund Core Allocation (£1.123M); WG Local Transport Network Fund (£0.277M); WG Local Road Refurbishment Grant (£1.260M); WG Safe Routes In The Community (£0.422M); WG Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Grant (£1.075M); WG Flood Recovery Funding (£1.321M); WG Emergency Financial Assistance Scheme (£0.451M); WG Resilient Roads Fund (£4.514M); WG 21st Century Schools (£7.889M); WG Circular Economy (£0.560M); WG Capital Funding Grant Towards Schools Maintenance Budgets (£4.045M); WG Hwb in Schools Infrastructure Grant (£2.500M); WG WLGA Covid Grant (£0.414M); and Integrated Care Fund (£1.209M).

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	2020/21 As at 31st March 2021		2019/20 As at 31st March 2020	
	Staff Nos.	% Turnover	Staff Nos.	% Turnover
Turnover – Council Wide	**10,888**	**6.84**	**10,670**	**9.85**
Community & Children's Services	2,946	6.59	2,845[1]	8.44[1]
Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services	941	6.70	964	8.40
Education & Inclusion Services	1,258	6.52	1,265	8.14
Schools Primary Secondary	4,873 3,043 1,830	7.47 7.49 7.43	4,855 3,066 1,789	11.64 9.95 14.53
Chief Executive's Division	870	4.83	741[1]	8.37[1]

- **Sickness Absence**

  With specific regard to Covid-19 and the recording of sickness absence, where staff have been unavailable for work due to: self–isolating; being part of the shielded list; have underlying conditions that places an individual at risk, such as being pregnant; or lives in the same household as someone that needs to be shielded, these occurrences have not been categorised as 'sickness absence' and as such are excluded from the analysis below.

Service Area	2020/21 As at 31st March 2021 %	2019/20 As at 31st March 2020 %
% days lost to sickness absence – Council Wide	**3.96**	**4.16**
Community & Children's Services	6.14	5.61[1]
Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services	4.99	4.74
Education & Inclusion Services	3.20	3.70
Schools Primary Secondary	2.88 3.21 2.33	3.56 3.79 3.16
Chief Executive's Division	2.62	2.48[1]

For a more detailed breakdown of 2020/21 sickness absence information, click here.

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[1] Restated for comparative purposes following staff transfer from Community & Children's Services - Business Services to Chief Executive - Finance & Digital Services

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 4 Strategic Risk Register can be viewed by clicking here, with specific updates included setting out the implications Covid-19 and the work undertaken to mitigate the impact as much as possible.

Section 5 – CORPORATE PLAN

Corporate Plan priority action plans for 2020/21 were reported to and approved by full Council on the 21st October 2020 covering the three priorities of People, Places and Prosperity. A summary of the progress made across the three priorities for the year ended 31st March 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 during the year.

Corporate Plan Priority Progress Update

o **PEOPLE** (Section 5a)

PEOPLE – Are independent, healthy and successful
Summary of progress to 31st March 2021
Assessments continued to take a person-centred approach as far as practicable during quarter 4, although our focus was afforded to those with greatest need. However, under ongoing Alert Level 4 restrictions, there has been a need to return to doing more work over the phone and for a lot of people we can do everything we need to do in this way. This has restricted the number of visits to people but, where necessary, we have continued to undertake critical visits in agreement with the person and, where applicable, their carer. However, as the pandemic continues, we experience growing pressures as more people need care and support, and workloads across Adult Services remain high and caseloads become increasingly more complex. There remains a waiting list of cases to be allocated, across Care and Support and in the ACE (Occupational Therapy) Team. Additional external support continued to be commissioned to reduce assessment and review backlogs across Care and Support. We continued to prioritise hospital discharges and the period since the beginning of December 2020 has continued to be demanding, although the position is now starting to stabilise. Despite care homes supporting the admission of patients from hospital, wherever possible and if they can provide the appropriate care safely, on-going Covid-19 outbreaks and the subsequent Public Health Wales (PHW) Covid free restrictions placed on admissions, is limiting care home placements (in particular, nursing and dementia), resulting in some discharges taking longer to complete. From 1st January to 31st March 2021, we supported in total 665 discharges, around 51 per week. The success of this response is testament to the strength of the established partnership with CTMUHB and our providers. The Cwrt yr Orsaf development in Pontypridd continued to make progress towards completion in Summer 2021, despite the significant challenges faced by Contractors due to Covid-19. Funding to redevelop the former Danymynydd Care Home into a new 60 unit extra care housing scheme in Porth in line with the Council's strategy to modernise options for older people and deliver extra care housing was agreed by the Council's Cabinet on 25th March 2021. Demolition of the former Care Home is planned for May 2021 and construction of the extra care housing scheme is due to commence in Autumn 2021, following planning approval during the Summer. We continued to work in partnership with housing providers to deliver modern additional supported housing accommodation for vulnerable people. The Crown Avenue (Treorchy) refurbishment was completed in early October 2020 and opened in January 2021. All of the flats have been allocated to people with a learning disability. Construction of supported housing accommodation at Oxford Street (Mountain Ash) also made good progress through the summer period and was completed in Spring 2021, with the building handed over on the 9th April 2021. Assessments of new tenants has commenced and residents will move in, in Summer 2021.

PEOPLE – Are independent, healthy and successful

The Council along with its regional Health and local authority partners worked with the care home sector to support the roll out of the Covid-19 vaccination programme and asymptomatic lateral flow testing to frontline social care staff.

The majority of care homes have been subject to PHW Covid free restrictions from 20th December 2020, resulting in limited opportunity to provide outdoor visits since the start of the new Alert Level 4 restrictions. However, where possible, some outdoor "window visits" have taken place in line with risk assessments and PHW and Welsh Government guidance. Indoor care home visits were allowed to resume from 13th March 2021 for one designated visitor. The decision on whether, and in what circumstances care home visits took place, rested with the individual care home provider, which included the Council in-house care homes. In each case, the care home put in place appropriate risk assessments, social distancing and safety measures to ensure resident safety.

In care homes with Covid-19 cases and unable to re-open to visitors, visits for exceptional circumstances, including, but not restricted to, end of life, still continued as they have been throughout the pandemic. Throughout the pandemic, care home providers have strived to maintain contact between their residents and their families, while operating within the wider restrictions in place. This has included, where possible, virtual visits and calls through various forms of technology to ensure residents remained connected with family members.

Whilst the majority of our day and respite services remain temporarily closed, we continued to support our most vulnerable people, assessed as critical due to their own or carer's needs, in their own homes and in the community. Plans are in place to reopen more service on a phased basis during May 2021 as Covid-19 lockdown restrictions ease.

We restarted full operation of the Stay Well@Home 2 service (7 days a week, including out of hours) from 6th July 2020 and this was extended to Merthyr Tydfil from 20th July 2020. Stay Well @Home 2 has been key to reducing unnecessary attendance to hospital, in particular by the Welsh Ambulance Service, by supporting people to remain safely at home throughout the winter period.

We reinstated our seven Community Resilience Centres following the introduction of local and national restrictions. Since the start of the pandemic a total of 3,393 individual residents have been supported, for example, with shopping, picking up prescriptions, friendly phone calls, dog walking, employment and benefits advice.

Performance in tracing cases and their contacts remained very high in spite of the significant surge in cases in winter 2020. Significant increases in staff for the service were secured from across all three Local Authorities in December in order to address demand and the service coped well, ensured adequate training was in place and completion of workloads. Some staff have returned to their substantive roles and some have moved into the vaccination programme. The staff in Test, Trace & Protect (TTP) will continue to respond to cases and contacts across Cwm Taf and undertake enhanced contact tracing whilst case numbers are manageable. There is flexibility to increase staff resource in TTP if the cases numbers increase.

The Welsh Government funded Coronavirus Childcare Assistance Scheme (C-CAS) has been delivered by the Childcare Team within Education and Inclusion Services. Places were allocated based on the submission of a successful application and children were placed with childcare settings that had remained open. The scheme ran from 1st April to 31st August 2020, with over 750 children offered placements and using 102 childcare providers. Flying Start childcare resumed in September 2020 and has remained fully operational since. Settings managed staffing challenges well with minimal impact on availability of provision. Lateral flow tests were also successfully introduced across all settings for staff.

PEOPLE – Are independent, healthy and successful

We continued to encourage residents to lead active and healthy lifestyles and maintain their mental wellbeing. We introduced online exercise classes via our Leisure For Life App in March 2020 and these continued to be made available. We also introduced some open-air classes, utilising our parks and 3G pitches, to allow customers to exercise in a safe manner outdoors in line with social distancing requirements. Our Sports Development Team also delivered safe, socially distanced exercise opportunities in the summer HUB schools. As at 10th August 2020, gym facilities re-opened in line with social distancing and public health guidelines. This was followed by the introduction of indoor fitness classes on 17th August and swimming pools from 24th August. However, during the firebreak lockdown in October and following the implementation of the Alert Level 4 restrictions on the 20th December 2020, gyms were closed and indoor and outdoor classes were cancelled in line with Welsh Government restrictions on meeting people outside of your household.

Independent and small group outdoor activities have been promoted on all social media platforms and through the Leisure For Life APP, along with key "benefits of regular activity" messages - for example, information to enable local walking, cycling and family activities. Support was also provided to sports clubs and organisations to access the Sport Wales Be Active Fund. All messages were in line with Welsh Government restrictions e.g. exercising alone or with your household during Level 4 restrictions.

A range of weekly wellbeing classes were provided online as part of our Adult Education programme, including Aromatherapy, Singing for wellbeing and lung health, All About Me and Crafts for Wellbeing. A variety of wellbeing self-help videos were also provided through our social media platforms, including support for individuals with anxiety. Leaners on our courses also received wellbeing calls from course tutors. An online programme of arts activity and performances has been curated and is available through the theatres' Facebook pages and RCT Theatres' YouTube page.

Children's Services continued to work to Welsh Government statutory guidance, subject to risk assessment and physical distancing requirements, adapting methods of service delivery as necessary. Given our statutory duties, we are incrementally returning to busines as usual, with the key difference being working from home and risk management of face to face work. Most staff have now been vaccinated. Priority was given to safely visiting and hearing the voices of children most at risk; this included those on the child protection register, those looked after where there is potential placement breakdown or those where input is critical to maintain them at home. We continued to look after children in both residential and foster care, prioritising children and carers most in need of support. We commissioned UKICS to increase social work capacity in our Intensive Intervention Services. Child Protection Conferences and Children Looked After reviews took place virtually attended by partners and family members where possible.

Youth Engagement & Participation Service (YEPS) staff remained in secondary schools and the support for learners pathway is still in place to ensure those young people who are struggling to return to school have the support to do/ re-engage with school and learning. Proactive street-based youth work provision was established in October, with all YEPS staff re-directed to providing information, advice, guidance and emotional support to young people in communities 5 nights a week. In the 8 weeks between October and the end of December (excluding the 2-week fire-break period) 2,699 contacts were made with young people across the County Borough. The Virtual Youth Offer remained available and will now remain as part of ongoing service delivery including virtual youth clubs, live Q&A sessions and live chat sessions involving BAROD and Sexual Health Nurses from the local health board.

The full action plan can be viewed by clicking here

Investment Priority Progress Update – Quarter 4

Progress in our Investment Priorities – PEOPLE		
Investment Area	**Investment Value[2] £M**	**Quarter 4 Update**
Leisure Centre Changing Rooms	0.088	This investment funding relates to works at Sobell Leisure Centre for changing room refurbishment and was completed in August 2020.
Extracare Housing	6.974	Works at the former Maesyffynnon Home for the Elderly site were completed in early 2020 and the first residents moved into the new facility in May 2020. Works commenced at the Pontypridd site in July 2019 and is progressing well, and are due to complete in 2021. Proposals for the extracare housing scheme in Porth were agreed by the Council's Cabinet on 3rd December 2020 and consideration of development proposals for Treorchy and Mountain Ash schemes are on-going.
Tackling Poverty Fund	0.300	This investment 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	**7.362**	

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

- **PLACES** (Section 5b)

PLACES - Where people are proud to live, work and play
Summary of progress to 31st March 2021

Street cleaning and waste services continued with normal working and this has included grass cutting and fly-tipping activities with Covid-19 safety measures incorporated within operational practices. The Enforcement Team continued to provide additional Covid-19 related support e.g. marshalling at Covid-19 test centres and supporting Public Health with Covid-19 compliance measures and enforcement. Community Recycling Centres continued to operate within required guidelines and have been extremely busy during 2020/21. At the end of the 2020/21 financial year, recycling performance was 69.72% (64.78% last year), the highest ever reported at a year end, and provides a sound platform to build on and achieve the Council's own target of 80% recycling by 2025 in line with the RCT Climate Change commitment.

The Highways Improvement Programme for 2020/21 continued during quarter 4. We have progressed plans for The Cynon Gateway North; the design and land negotiations of the A4119 dualling between Coed Ely has been progressed; and the Environmental Impact Assessment for Llanharan Bypass is nearing completion with pre-planning consultation anticipated during the early part of the 2021/22 financial year. Our work continued on Storm Dennis repairs with the completion and reopening of the Ynysynpharad Park footbridge in March 2021 and the completion of major earthworks and restoration of the river to normal course in the Tylorstown Tip Phase 2/3 works. Phase 4 of this scheme is currently being designed.

The Council's Transportation Service worked to existing delivery plan priorities during the year, reacting to requests and delivering safe passenger transport services that operated within required Welsh Government and Public Health Wales guidelines.

With reference to air quality monitoring, provisional data continued to indicate a positive decrease in nitrogen dioxide levels particularly in urban areas. It should be noted that it could be some time before the immediate and longer-term impacts of Covid-19 travel restrictions are fully understood. Air quality monitoring data will be reviewed in the coming months in preparation for submission of the annual Air Quality Progress Report to Welsh Government required by September 2021.

Substance Misuse service users continued to be supported remotely and face to face meetings were held when necessary. The newly developed Specialist Substance Misuse and Mental Health Team became operational and provided crisis intervention support to residents across Cwm Taf Morgannwg including those residents placed in temporary accommodation including Bed and Breakfast accommodation and hostel provision.

We continued to provide remote and face to face support (where it was considered safe) to those experiencing domestic abuse and recovery plans are being discussed on how to safely return and meet with clients at the Oasis Centre.

Our community cohesion work had been difficult to progress with limited contact throughout the pandemic. Despite this, we continued to explore opportunities for working virtually with our key partners.

We continued to work with our partners, the National Trading Standards Team and North Yorkshire Trading Standards, to ensure scam media accounts and websites were removed. We also increased our social media presence to ensure scam warnings reached a wider audience particularly with the increase of 'voice automated' scam messages from HMRC, DVLA, Royal

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

Mail and COVID test scams. There has also been an increase in Council Tax scams this quarter that we are working on in partnership with the National Anti-Fraud Network.

Our successful work to target the worst hit Truecall clients continued as part of the Carmarthenshire Trading Standards Pilot. This has enabled us to effectively target resources and block scam callers permanently.

This quarter saw a rise in complaints of doorstep crime for building, roofing and gardening work, which is common for this time of year. We increased our messaging to residents to ensure that they protect themselves and can make informed decisions, and how they can report any incidents should they occur.

We continued to invest in our green spaces and increase biodiversity. Grass cutting plans for 2021/22 are being developed that will commence in April, and our biodiversity areas will be cut at the end of August. We also progressed the signposting of wildflower management areas.

Our work to repair flood damage in Ynysangharad Park has been completed, and our programme of playground upgrade and repairs continues.

The latest Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group took place on 17 March 2021.

The full action plan can be viewed by clicking here

Investment Priority Progress Update – Quarter 4

		Progress in our Investment Priorities – PLACES
Investment Area	**Investment Value[3] £M**	**Quarter 4 Update**
Highways Infrastructure Repairs	8.624	The additional resources are being used in conjunction with existing resources to deliver a programme of highways infrastructure repairs between 2020/21 and 2022/23. The Council's new Capital Programme 2021/22 to 2023/24, as approved by Council on 10th March 2021, allocated further additional investment resources £3M to this area and will be reflected within the 2021/22 quarter 1 Performance Report.
Play Areas	0.675	There are 28 schemes which form the planned programme of works for 2020/21. As at 31st March 2021, 17 had been completed, 1 remained under construction, 5 had been designed, costed and scheduled and 5 are to be designed. Due to prioritising schemes and contractor restrictions/delays, the 11 schemes not completed at year-end will be carried forward to 2021/22. The Council's new Capital Programme 2021/22 to 2023/24, as approved by Council on 10th March 2021, allocated further additional investment resources £0.250M to this area and will be reflected within the 2021/22 quarter 1 Performance Report.
Skate Parks/Multi Use Games Areas	0.184	There are 4 schemes which form the planned programme of works for 2020/21 and include rebuilding and line marking. The on-going Covid-19 restrictions has impacted on contractor availability with 2 schemes under construction and 2 to be designed; all 4 schemes will be carried forward and completed in 2021/22.
Cynon Gateway South – Mountain Ash Cross Valley Link	4.750	On 16th October 2020 the link road between the A4059 and B4275 Miskin Road was opened.
Structures: St Albans Bridge and Brook Street Footbridge	2.574	• St. Alban's Bridge – the bridge was opened on 11th December 2020 with reinstatement works completed in quarter 4; and • Brook St. Footbridge – the estimated start date for works is summer 2021 and discussions are on-going with Transport for Wales in respect of the work to be undertaken.
Structures	2.791	The investment funding has been allocated to support structure projects: • Completed schemes – Williamstown Footbridge, Station Street bridge (Treherbert), Castell Ifor (Hopkinstown),

[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 Value[3] £M**	**Quarter 4 Update**
		Rhydyfelin Culverts, Gwawr Street (Aberaman - repairs to walls) and Phase 1 of B4273 Ynysybwl/Glyncoch Retaining Walls; and • New scheme – Bodringallt bridge (Ystrad) - where works are due to start in mid-2021.
Parks Structures	1.335	The investment funding has been allocated to support various footbridge repairs and replacements within Parks: • Works completed - Station Street River Wall (Treherbert); Bridge replacement of Nant Lonydd Bridge (Upper Boat); Replacement culverts at Blaennantygroes and Hirwaun Welfare Ground; retaining wall maintenance at Dare Valley Country Park; and replacement footbridges at Clydach Vale Countryside Park, near Crownhill Community Centre and at Llwynau Farm; and • Contracting process in progress - Bridge deck and parapet replacement of Maesyfelin Footbridge (Pontyclun); and • Various inspections and surveys continue to be undertaken as advance preparation for future schemes. The Council's new Capital Programme 2021/22 to 2023/24, as approved by Council on 10th March 2021, allocated further additional investment resources £0.750M to this area and will be reflected within the 2021/22 quarter 1 Performance Report.
Parks and Green Spaces	1.000	This investment funding is supporting drainage, pavilion and infrastructure improvements to various parks sites. The programme comprises 93 schemes that are being managed across financial years 2020/21 and 2021/22. The Council's new Capital Programme 2021/22 to 2023/24, as approved by Council on 10th March 2021, allocated further additional investment resources £0.500M to this area and will be reflected within the 2021/22 quarter 1 Performance Report.
Cemeteries	0.088	This investment funding has been allocated to deliver works at 4 cemetery locations: • Works completed - Maes Yr Arian, Mountain Ash (replace entrance gate and fence) and Byn Yr Gaer, Hirwaun (repair of damaged palisade); • Trealaw – reset road drains; and • Glyntaff Cemetery - additional roadworks; waste removal; additional top car park, introduction of security measures, supply, delivery and installation of materials for decoration of the South Chapel; public conveniences; creation of screen and store; and replacement of fencing around main car park.

Progress in our Investment Priorities – PLACES		
Investment Area	Investment Value[3] £M	Quarter 4 Update
Llanharan Bypass	2.000	This investment funding is supporting various stages of development, preliminary design, ground investigations and ecology investigations. The next stage programmed is the pre-Planning Application Consultation that is scheduled to be undertaken during summer 2021.
A4119 Dualling (Stinkpot Hill)	6.000	This investment funding is supporting the dualling of the highway between the South Wales Fire Service Headquarters roundabout and Coed Ely roundabout. Detail design work is progressing; planning permission was granted for an Active Travel footbridge toward the northern end of the project; and work is on-going to secure land required and the associated Compulsory Purchase Order has been submitted.
Community Hubs	0.401	This investment funding relates to supporting: • Porth Plaza – works were completed on 8th June 2020; and • Treorchy – procurement process underway for works to be undertaken to improve the proposed site of Treorchy Community Hub at Treorchy Library (cladding and new windows).
Gelli/Treorchy Link Road	0.400	This investment funding relates to investigatory works for a solution which will help alleviate congestion at Stag Square. Feasibility and preliminary design options are ongoing and a WelTAG stage 1 has been completed.
Cynon Gateway (North), Aberdare Bypass	2.000	This investment funding relates to the preliminary design for a bypass continuation from A4059 Aberdare to join the A465 Heads Of the Valleys road. Following the pre-Planning Application Consultation during quarter 3, the responses were evaluated and a planning application submitted in quarter 4.
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 completed in respect of the new office building, garage, IT networking, CCTV and lighting.
Land Drainage	0.750	This investment funding is supporting drainage and culvert network works. The ongoing programme includes works at: • Abercynon (Plantation Road) and Porth Relief Road – works complete; • Cwmbach – works commenced and scheduled for completion in the first half of 2021/22; and

Progress in our Investment Priorities – PLACES		
Investment Area	**Investment Value[3] £M**	**Quarter 4 Update**
		• Property Flood Resistance Programme – on-going engagement with property owners and provision of flood prevention measures e.g. flood gates.
Total	**35.222**	

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 31st March 2021

Covid-19 recovery grants for town centre businesses has provided over 80 businesses across RCT with grants totalling £435,000 to make external improvements to premises. Other renewed grant offers for businesses include a new flood resilience grant, a new major projects investment fund and refocussed enterprise investment fund and town centre maintenance grant, providing a comprehensive package of support to help businesses survive, adapt and diversify. Since September, the enterprise investment fund has supported 50 businesses with grant awards totalling £275,000 and 7 businesses have benefitted from flood resilience grants. Plans to deliver a package of support for manufacturing businesses, in partnership with Welsh Government's South East Wales Regional Team, will be progressed in the new financial year.

Key schemes are underway which will lead to a more sustainable future for our town centres, including the redevelopment of Mountain Ash Town Hall and Llwynypia Courthouse. Also in Mountain Ash, the Oxford buildings scheme is now complete, delivering supported housing for adults with learning disabilities. Good progress is being made on the Porth Transport hub with planning permission granted, detailed development discussions continuing with Transport Wales and the construction tender process underway. A grant award to Rhondda Housing will see the delivery of a new housing development replacing badly fire damaged properties in Tonypandy. Construction of 20 modern business units at Robertstown is well underway, with completion planned for late 2021. Across RCT several key commercial property redevelopments have also commenced which will repurpose empty properties for new uses, with further schemes in the development stages.

Engagement on the draft RCT Tourism Strategy is currently underway. Development work at Dare Valley Country Park and Ynysangharad War Memorial Park continues as part of the Valleys Regional Park development. Zip World is now opened, with other key projects including Abernant and Rhondda Tunnels under development. As the Tourism sector reopens, we continue to promote visits to RCT through marketing campaigns and engage with local tourism businesses. Funding has also been granted for the development of a cultural hub in Treorchy, with external work underway.

Work continued on the Local Development Plan review, with over 200 potential sites put forward during the call for candidate sites, covering a wide range of uses.

In 2020/21, 164 affordable housing units were delivered utilising £8.2M Social Housing Grant allocation. Increased funding of £15.3M has been secured for 2021/22. The social housing lettings agency scheme also continued to progress well with positive engagement with landlords.

During the second lockdown period, schools were provided with guidance and support on distance, digital and blended learning, including sharing best practice and the provision of bespoke support packages to best meet the needs of individual schools. The return of pupils to face to face learning has been well organised in partnership with schools, with no significant operational issues. School improvement services continue to work closely with schools to evaluate the impact of Covid-19 on learner outcomes and ensure that strategic approaches promote high quality teaching and learning to improve outcomes for our children and young people.

Pupil wellbeing continued to be a high priority and effective use of grant funding continued to support strategic action plans for Wellbeing and Additional Learning Needs Transformation, including training in nurture approaches. Workshops, virtual training and the Education Psychology Service helpline

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

continued to provide advice and guidance to schools on supporting wellbeing and pupils with additional learning needs.

Significant progress is being made on the second wave of school investments in Band B, including completion of the first phase of works at Ffynnon Taf primary school and work commencing at YGG Aberdar. Projects in the greater Pontypridd area are also underway, with 3 projects out to tender and 2 in the design phase.

Referrals into employment support programmes have increased, with Communities for Work+ supporting 369 people into work and the Communities for Work programme achieving targets for engaging with adults and young people over the lifetime of the scheme. The chromebook loan scheme has seen 30 devices being loaned to clients to carry out job search and training, and to attend online interviews. In addition, during 2020/21 the Council recruited a further 26 graduates and 33 apprentices with plans for the next intake in September 2021 now underway.

The full action plan can be viewed by clicking here

Investment Priority Progress Update – Quarter 4

	Progress in our Investment Priorities – PROSPERITY	
Investment Area	**Investment Value[4] £M**	**Quarter 4 Update**
Empty Property Grant	1.500	At present, all empty property grant applications are processed via the Welsh Government funded Valley Taskforce Scheme and this approach will continue until the Welsh Government scheme closes on 31st March 2021.

Schools	0.836	• Schemes on-going include:
		
		  o Cymmer Primary – demolition of the canteen and erection of fencing was completed in August 2020. Carpark works to be completed during summer 2021;
		  o Ferndale Community School – all works completed (i.e. to the main swimming pool hall, construction of new retaining wall and entrance path and new signage installed);
		  o Gelli Primary – all works completed (i.e. internal refurbishment, two classroom extension, additional external works, fencing, new kitchen windows and resurfacing of driveway and line marking); and
		  o Llanharan Primary – all works completed (i.e. to remodel/refurbish foundation phase classrooms, extend yard, alter/fence-in carpark and 2 classroom extension (including toilets and associated external works)).

Transport Infrastructure	2.500	This investment funding is supporting a wider programme of highways capital works including: • Highway Network Improvement completed on the A4059 (near Cwmbach / Aberaman) to improve traffic flow at a roundabout / extending the two-lane approach; • Pedestrian crossings completed in Trealaw, Penrhiwceiber and Mountain Ash to improve road safety and promote active travel; • Design work has commenced at further pedestrian crossing locations including Tonyrefail, Groesfaen and Llanharan (to improve road safety and promote active travel); • A4058 Asda Tonypandy junction - design and development ongoing to improve junction capacity and traffic flow; and • A4059 / Bowls Club junction, feasibility study commenced to investigate improving the junction to improve traffic flow along the A4059.
Tonyrefail Roundabout	0.500	This investment funding relates to Tonyrefail roundabout for feasibility and design to improve the congestion and compliment the strategic development at Coed Ely. Works on-going include preliminary design of the main junction together with Active Travel

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[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 Value[4] £M**	**Quarter 4 Update**
		improvements. Further ground investigation work and drainage surveys were carried out in quarter 3 and design work is continuing.
Llys Cadwyn Development	2.024	Project complete. 3 Llys Cadwyn handed over to Transport for Wales and lease agreements signed for the A3 units. Marketing of the office and A3 space in 2 Llys Cadwyn is ongoing. Final works were also undertaken on the footbridge, including the installation of permanent gates.
Park and Ride Programme	1.000	This investment funding is supporting the development work needed to create additional 'park and ride' car parking spaces at: • Pontyclun - feasibility design has been carried out and preliminary design is due to commence; and • Porth – phase 3 feasibility design is complete and preliminary design is underway.
Strategic Regeneration Investment	0.200	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 demolition phase of the project commenced on 22nd February, for a period of 6 weeks, with the demolition and removal of two vacant / dilapidated buildings and the area prepared for the construction phase. The project is scheduled for completion during summer 2021.
Robertstown and Coed Ely ERDF Match Funding	4.200	• Robertstown – good progress made during quarter 4 including: foundations laid, steel frames erected and roofing works underway for a number of plots; formation of the access road is underway; and manhole installation and culvert diversion in progress. • Coed Ely – the building was handed over on 15th January 2021. During quarter 4, air tests were undertaken, CO2 / Smoke vents installed, signage installed and snagging works progressed. Work is on-going to secure a tenant for the unit.
Total	**12.760**	

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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Education & Inclusion Services Revenue Budget - to 31st March 2020/21

Revised budget as at 31st December	Service Area	Virements as at 31st March	Revised budget as at 31st March	Final Outturn	Variance	ISSUES	Reasons For Variances
£'000		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000		

Delegated Schools

22,269	Middle		22,269	22,269	0		
69,982	Primary		69,982	69,982	0		
60,178	Secondary		60,178	60,178	0		
9,149	Special		9,149	9,149	0		
161,578		0	161,578	161,578	0		

Total Individual School Budgets

161,578		0	161,578	161,578	0		

Education & Inclusion Services

1,124	School Achievement		1,124	1,082	-42		
866	Education Improvement Grant		866	866	0		
416	Service Transformation & Education Information Systems		416	399	-17		
5,492	Additional Learning Needs		5,492	5,462	-30		
2,778	Education Other than at School		2,778	2,736	-42		
682	Attendance and Wellbeing Service		682	721	39		
4,858	Nursery & Early Years		4,858	4,862	4		
2,626	Group Directorate		2,626	2,632	6		
135	Music Service		135	135	0		
18,977		0	18,977	18,895	-82		

21st Century Schools

1,402	School Planning & Reorganisation		1,402	1,449	47		
3,018	Asset Management / Financing		3,018	3,018	0		
6,870	Catering		6,870	6,827	-43		
11,290		0	11,290	11,294	4		

Total Non School Budgets

30,267		0	30,267	30,189	-78		

Overall Total Budget

191,845		0	191,845	191,767	-78		

Director of Education & Inclusion Services Gaynor Davies

Head Of Finance Stephanie Davies

Education & Inclusion Services Revenue Budget - to 31st March 2020/21

31st March Virement Report

Education & Inclusion Services	Total	Delegated Schools	Education and Inclusion Services	21st Century Schools
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Revised Budget as at 31st December	191,845	161,578	18,977	11,290
Virements proposed to 31st March				
Nil	0	0	0	0
Proposed Revised Budget - 31st March	191,845	161,578	18,977	11,290

Virements that require approval by the Executive, in accordance with

Section 4.8 of the Council's Financial Procedure Rules

Community & Children's Services Revenue Budget - to 31st March 2020/21

Revised budget as at 31st December	Service Area	Virements as at 31st March	Revised budget as at 31st March	Final Outturn	Variance	ISSUES	Reasons For Variances
£'000		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000		

Adult Services

7,654	Long Term Care & Support	0	7,654	8,173	519	■	Overspend mainly due to staffing costs (including Agency costs) partly offset by underspends on non-pay budgets
57,486	Commissioned Services	0	57,486	58,015	529	■	Overspend in the main relates to Specialist Learning Difficulties and Mental Health placements together with External Supported Living Services
19,526	Provider Services	0	19,526	19,880	354	■	Overspend due to under-achievement of income in Home for the Elderly establishments partly offset by staffing vacancies and underspends on non-pay budgets.
9,635	Short Term Intervention Services	0	9,635	8,737	-898	■	Underspend mainly due to Intermediate Care & Reablement (including In house Support@Home) together with Prevention and Early Intervention
-4,353	Fairer Charging	0	-4,353	-4,370	-17		
1,607	Management, Safeguarding & Support Services	0	1,607	1,572	-35		
91,555		0	91,555	92,007	452		

Children Services

27,958	Safeguarding & Support (inc. Children Looked After)	0	27,958	30,422	2,464	■	Overspend mainly due to external placements and in-house residential placements, partly offset by projected underspend on in-house family placements
8,068	Early Intervention	0	8,068	7,503	-565	■	Underspend mainly due to Youth Service activity budgets partly offset by overspend on the Rapid Intervention and Response Team
997	Cwm Taf Youth Offending Service	0	997	755	-242	■	Underspend mainly due to staffing vacancies and lower than anticipated expenditure across non-pay budgets
11,939	Intensive Intervention	0	11,939	10,965	-974	■	Underspend due to temporary staff vacancies along with lower than anticipated legal costs and aftercare payments
381	Management & Support Services	0	381	324	-57	■	Underspend mainly due to savings across staffing and non pay budgets
49,343		0	49,343	49,969	626		

Transformation

720	Regional Training Unit	0	720	675	-45		
680	Group & Transformation Management	0	680	696	16		
1,096	Service Improvement	0	1,096	1,020	-76	■	Underspend mainly due to staffing vacancies and lower than anticipated expenditure across non-pay budgets
22	Purchasing & Commissioning	0	22	20	-2		
2,518		0	2,518	2,411	-107		

Community & Children's Services Revenue Budget - to 31st March 2020/21

Revised budget as at 31st December	Service Area	Virements as at 31st March	Revised budget as at 31st March	Final Outturn	Variance	ISSUES	Reasons For Variances
£'000		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000		

Public Health and Protection

5,333	Public Protection	0	5,333	5,336	3		
4,880	Community Services	0	4,880	4,606	-274	■	Underspend mainly due to savings across staffing and non pay budgets
900	Communities & Wellbeing	0	900	827	-73	■	Underspend mainly due to savings across staffing and non pay budgets
5,197	Leisure, Parks & Countryside and Community Facilities	0	5,197	5,044	-153	■	Underspend mainly due to savings across staffing and non pay budgets
126	Group Directorate	0	126	151	25		
16,436		0	16,436	15,964	-472		

159,852		0	159,852	160,351	499		

Group Director   **Paul Mee**

Head of Finance   **Neil Griffiths**

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Community & Children's Services Revenue Budget - to 31st March 2020/21

31st March Virement Report

Community & Children's Services Group	Total £'000	Adult Services £'000	Children's Services £'000	Transformation £'000	Public Health & Protection £'000
Revised Budget as at 31st December	159,852	91,555	49,343	2,518	16,436
Virements proposed to 31st March					
Nil	**0**	0	0	0	0
Proposed Revised Budget - 31st March	159,852	91,555	49,343	2,518	16,436

Virements that require approval by the Executive, in accordance with Section 4.8 of the Council's Financial Procedure Rules

Chief Executive's Division Revenue Budget - to 31st March 2020/21

Revised budget as at 31st December	Service Area	Virements as at 31st March	Revised budget as at 31st March	Final Outturn	Variance	ISSUES	Reasons For Variances
£'000		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000		

Chief Executive's Division

391	Chief Executive	0	391	389	-2		
2,913	Democratic Services & Communications	0	2,913	2,865	-48		
11,997	Human Resources	0	11,997	11,863	-134	■	Higher than anticipated external income and temporary staffing vacancies
1,636	Legal Services	0	1,636	1,555	-81	■	Temporary staffing vacancies and higher than anticipated external income
10,702	Finance & Digital Services	0	10,702	10,638	-64	■	Higher than anticipated external income and temporary staffing vacancies
3,005	Corporate Estates	0	3,005	2,926	-79	■	Higher than anticipated external income
30,644		0	30,644	30,236	-408		

Total Chief Executive's Division

30,644		0	30,644	30,236	-408		

Chief Executive   **Chris Bradshaw**

Head of Finance   **Martyn Hughes**

Chief Executive's Division Revenue Budget - to 31st March 2020/21

31st March Virement Report

Chief Executive's Division	Total £'000	Chief Executive £'000	Democratic Services & Communications £'000	Human Resources £'000	Legal Services £'000	Finance & Digital Services £'000	Corporate Estates £'000
Revised Budget as at 31st December	30,644	391	2,913	11,997	1,636	10,702	3,005
Virements proposed to 31st March							
Nil	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Proposed Revised Budget - 31st March	30,644	391	2,913	11,997	1,636	10,702	3,005

Virements that require approval by the Executive, in accordance with
Section 4.8 of the Council's Financial Procedure Rules

Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services Revenue Budget - to 31st March 2020/21

Revised budget as at 31st December	Service Area	Virements as at 31st March	Revised budget as at 31st March	Final Outturn	Variance	ISSUES	Reasons For Variances
£'000		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000		

Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services

Prosperity & Development

2,791	Prosperity & Development	0	2,791	2,817	26		
2,791		0	2,791	2,817	26		

Frontline Services

3,495	Highways Management	0	3,495	3,540	45		
14,089	Transportation	0	14,089	13,905	-184	■	Underspend due to higher than anticipated external funding and savings as a result of contract gatekeeping arrangements
249	Strategic Projects	0	249	271	22		
4,637	Street Cleansing	0	4,637	4,591	-46		
970	Facilities Cleaning	0	970	852	-118	■	Underspend due to higher than anticipated income
4,076	Highways Maintenance	0	4,076	4,099	23		
17,981	Waste Services	0	17,981	18,583	602	■	Overspend due to increased costs in relation to waste disposal
2,165	Fleet Management	0	2,165	2,025	-140	■	Underspend due to temporary staffing vacancies and a reduction in vehicle maintenance costs due to new vehicles being in operation
3,715	Parks Services	0	3,715	3,760	45		
999	Group Directorate	0	999	1,067	68	■	Overspend due to an increase in the required level of provision for bad debt for the group
52,376		0	52,376	52,693	317		

Overall Total Budget

55,167		0	55,167	55,510	343		

Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services Revenue Budget - to 31st March 2020/21

Revised budget as at 31st December	Service Area	Virements as at 31st March	Revised budget as at 31st March	Final Outturn	Variance	ISSUES	Reasons For Variances
£'000		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000		

Group Director   **Nigel Wheeler**

Head of Finance   **Martyn Hughes**

Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services Revenue Budget - to 31st March 2020/21

31st March Virement Report

Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services Group	Total £'000	Prosperity & Development £'000	Frontline Services £'000
Revised Budget as at 31st December	55,167	2,791	52,376
Virements proposed to 31st March			
Nil	0	0	0
Proposed Revised Budget - 31st March	55,167	2,791	52,376

Virements that require approval by the Executive, in accordance with Section 4.8 of the Council's Financial Procedure Rules

Council Wide Revenue Budget - to 31st March 2020/21

Revised budget as at 31st December	Service Area	Virements as at 31st March	Revised budget as at 31st March	Final Outturn	Variance	ISSUES	Reasons For Variances
£'000		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000		
19,713	Capital Financing	0	19,713	19,463	-250	∎	Underspend due to lower than forecasted borrowing costs (primarily due to lower interest rates)
12,438	Levies	0	12,438	12,438	0		
13,216	Miscellaneous	0	13,216	13,310	94	∎	Projected overspends on authority wide budgets
425	NNDR Relief	0	425	429	4		
24,680	Council Tax Reduction Scheme	0	24,680	24,680	0		
767	MTFP - in Year Budget Reductions - Transition Funding	0	767	767	0		
71,239		0	71,239	71,087	-152		

Council Wide Budgets - to 31st March 2020/21

31st March Virement Report

Council Wide Budgets	Total
	£'000
Revised Budget as at 31st December	71,239
Virements proposed to 31st March	
Nil	0
Proposed Revised Budget - 31st March	71,239

Virements that require approval by the Executive, in accordance with Section 4.8 of the Council's Financial Procedure Rules
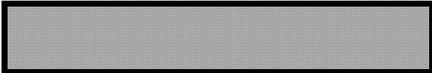
At the end of the last financial year (2019/20) there were a number of commitments and proposed projects which had not been completed by 31st March 2020. These have been set up as Earmark Reserves for 2020/21 and shown below is actual expenditure against each Service Area.

Service Area	Earmarked Reserves	Full Year Expenditure as at 31st March 2021
	£M	£M
Prior-Year Commitments:		
Education & Inclusion Services	1.858	1.090
Community & Children's Services	1.866	0.303
Prosperity, Development & Frontline Servcies	2.428	0.197
Chief Executive's Division	1.716	0.195
Authority Wide Budgets	0.548	0.334
Total	**8.416**	**2.119**

Scheme	3 Year Capital Programme 2020 - 2023						2020/2021 Actual Spend as at 31st March 2021	Issues	Commentary	Management Action Agreed	Responsible Officer
	2020/2021 Budget as at 31st December 2020	2020/2021 Budget Variance	2020/2021 Budget as at 31st March 2021	2021/2022 Budget	2022/2023 Budget	Total 3 Year Budget					
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000				
Finance & Digital Services											
CIVICA Financials	244	-85	159	285	200	644	159	■	Update Capital programme in line with latest cost projection	Reprofile budget from 2020/21 into 2021/22	Paul Griffiths
Capitalisation of Computer HW/SW & Licences	500	561	1,061	500	500	2,061	1,061	■	Update Capital programme in line with latest cost projection	Introduced Revenue Funding to the Capital Programme.	Paul Griffiths
Total Finance & Digital Services	**744**	**476**	**1,220**	**785**	**700**	**2,705**	**1,220**				
Corporate Estates											
Major repair/refurbishment and/or rationalisation of Service Group Accommodation	221	198	419	410	150	979	419	■	Realign budgets in line with service priorities	Reallocate the Council's own resources within the Capital Programme	Dave Powell
Strategic Maintenance	50	-38	12	70	50	132	12				
Asset Management Planning	50	-10	40	60	50	150	40				
Corporate Improvement	8	15	23	0	0	23	23				
Asbestos Management	175	-165	10	175	175	360	10	■	Realign budgets in line with service priorities	Reallocate the Council's own resources within the Capital Programme	Dave Powell
Asbestos Remediation Works	50	-49	1	50	50	101	1				
Legionella Remediation Works	275	-155	120	275	275	670	120	■	Realign budgets in line with service priorities	Reallocate the Council's own resources within the Capital Programme	Dave Powell
Legionella Management	175	-64	111	175	175	461	111	■	Realign budgets in line with service priorities	Reallocate the Council's own resources within the Capital Programme	Dave Powell
Housing & Regeneration	137	-135	2	0	0	2	2	■	Realign budgets in line with service priorities	Reallocate the Council's own resources within the Capital Programme	Dave Powell
Carbon Reduction Programme	1,001	-574	427	612	0	1,039	427	■	Update Capital programme in line with latest cost projection	Reprofile budget from 2020/21 into 2021/22	Steve Lock
WG Smart Living WBRID Phase 1	0	100	100	0	0	100	100	■	New Scheme	Introduced WG Smart Living WBRID Grant	Steve Lock
Taffs Well Thermal Spring	250	-240	10	515	0	525	10	■	Update Capital programme in line with latest cost projection	Reprofile budget from 2020/21 into 2021/22	Steve Lock
Total Corporate Estates	**2,392**	**-1,117**	**1,275**	**2,342**	**925**	**4,542**	**1,275**				
Group Total	**3,136**	**-641**	**2,495**	**3,127**	**1,625**	**7,247**	**2,495**				

Chief Executive   Chris Bradshaw
Head of Finance   Martyn Hughes

Scheme	3 Year Capital Programme 2020 - 2023						2020/2021 Actual Spend as at 31st March 2021	Issues	Commentary	Management Action Agreed	Responsible Officer
	2020/2021 Budget as at 31st December 2020	2020/2021 Budget Variance	2020/2021 Budget as at 31st March 2021	2021/2022 Budget	2022/2023 Budget	Total 3 Year Budget					
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000				
Prosperity & Development											
Planning & Regeneration											
Enterprise Investment Fund	207	56	263	305	200	768	263	■	Update Capital programme in line with latest cost projection	Reprofile budget from 2021/22 into 2020/21	Simon Gale
Flood Resilience Grants	100	-100	0	300	0	300	0	■	Update Capital programme in line with latest cost projection	Reprofile budget from 2020/21 into 2021/22	Simon Gale
Taff Vale Development	7,061	35	7,096	1,412	0	8,508	7,096				
Targeted Regeneration Investment (TRI) Programme Regional	1,087	41	1,128	703	0	1,831	1,128				
TRI Bingo Hall (Pontypridd)	1,341	-523	818	730	0	1,548	818	■	Update Capital programme in line with latest cost projection	Reprofile budget from 2020/21 into 2021/22	Simon Gale
Major Projects Investment Fund	100	-100	0	100	0	100	0	■	Update Capital programme in line with latest cost projection	Reprofile budget from 2020/21 into 2021/22	Simon Gale
Regeneration Investment	677	-251	426	950	1,157	2,533	426	■	Update Capital programme in line with latest cost projection	Reprofile budget from 2020/21 into 2021/22 and 2022/23	Simon Gale
Robertstown Development	3,217	-1,624	1,593	4,611	163	6,367	1,593	■	Update Capital programme in line with latest cost projection	Reprofile budget from 2020/21 into 2021/22	Simon Gale
Coed Ely Development	2,702	-300	2,402	299	0	2,701	2,402	■	Update Capital programme in line with latest cost projection	Reprofile budget from 2020/21 into 2021/22	Simon Gale
Hirwaun Industrial Estate	14	-10	4	10	0	14	4				
RCT Tracks and Trails Development	120	-120	0	131	0	131	0	■	Update Capital programme in line with latest cost projection	Reprofile budget from 2020/21 into 2021/22	Simon Gale
Pontypridd YMCA	961	-114	847	614	0	1,461	847	■	Update Capital programme in line with latest cost projection	Reprofile budget from 2020/21 into 2021/22	Simon Gale
VRP Discovery Gateways Dare Valley Country Park	388	22	410	57	0	467	410				
VRP Discovery Gateways Ynysangharad War Memorial Park	899	-148	751	448	0	1,199	751	■	Update Capital programme in line with latest cost projection	Reprofile budget from 2020/21 into 2021/22	Simon Gale
Porth Interchange Metro+ LTF	850	1	851	1,500	0	2,351	851				
Transforming Town Centres - Green Infrastructure	35	0	35	0	0	35	35				
VTF Courthouse, Llwynypia	299	-210	89	210	0	299	89	■	Update Capital programme in line with latest cost projection	Reprofile budget from 2020/21 into 2021/22	Simon Gale
VTF COVID Recovery	0	11	11	269	0	280	11				
Total Planning & Regeneration	**20,058**	**-3,334**	**16,724**	**12,649**	**1,520**	**30,893**	**16,724**				
Cardiff Capital Region City Deal											
Cardiff Capital Region City Deal	0	315	315	0	0	315	315	■	Update Capital programme in line with latest cost projection	Introduced Revenue Funding to the Capital Programme.	Chris Bradshaw
Total Cardiff Capital Region City Deal	**0**	**315**	**315**	**0**	**0**	**315**	**315**				

Scheme	3 Year Capital Programme 2020 - 2023						2020/2021 Actual Spend as at 31st March 2021 £'000	Issues	Commentary	Management Action Agreed	Responsible Officer
	2020/2021 Budget as at 31st December 2020 £'000	2020/2021 Budget Variance £'000	2020/2021 Budget as at 31st March 2021 £'000	2021/2022 Budget £'000	2022/2023 Budget £'000	Total 3 Year Budget £'000					
Private Sector Housing											
Disabled Facilities Grants/Adaptations (DFG)	2,108	8	2,116	4,229	4,000	10,345	2,116				
Maintenance Repair Assistance (MRA)	450	-142	308	592	450	1,350	308	■	Update Capital programme in line with latest cost projection	Reprofile budget from 2020/21 into 2021/22	Simon Gale
Renovation Grants Exceptional Circumstances & Home Improvement Zones	467	-130	337	539	450	1,326	337	■	Update Capital programme in line with latest cost projection	Reprofile budget from 2020/21 into 2021/22	Simon Gale
Empty Properties Grants Investment	200	-7	193	1,245	0	1,438	193				
Valleys Taskforce RCT+ Empty Homes	3,872	-2,624	1,248	8,624	0	9,872	1,248	■	Update Capital programme in line with latest cost projection	Reprofile budget from 2020/21 into 2021/22	Simon Gale
Affordable Housing	423	-323	100	1,555	800	2,455	100	■	Update Capital programme in line with latest cost projection	Reprofile budget from 2020/21 into 2021/22	Simon Gale
Storm Dennis - Emergency Flood Recovery Grant	500	-449	51	449	0	500	51	■	Update Capital programme in line with latest cost projection	Reprofile budget from 2020/21 into 2021/22	Simon Gale
Tackling Poverty Fund	30	-30	0	300	0	300	0				
Community Regeneration	80	-70	10	390	250	650	10	■	Update Capital programme in line with latest cost projection	Reprofile budget from 2020/21 into 2021/22	Simon Gale
Housing & Regeneration Investment	0	0	0	135	0	135	0				
Total Private Sector Housing	**8,130**	**-3,767**	**4,363**	**18,058**	**5,950**	**28,371**	**4,363**				
Total Prosperity & Development	**28,188**	**-6,786**	**21,402**	**30,707**	**7,470**	**59,579**	**21,402**				

Scheme	3 Year Capital Programme 2020 - 2023						2020/2021 Actual Spend as at 31st March 2021	Issues	Commentary	Management Action Agreed	Responsible Officer
	2020/2021 Budget as at 31st December 2020	2020/2021 Budget Variance	2020/2021 Budget as at 31st March 2021	2021/2022 Budget	2022/2023 Budget	Total 3 Year Budget					
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000				
Frontline Services											
Highways Technical Services											
Highways Improvements	8,089	2,847	10,936	6,402	1,100	18,438	10,936	■	Update Capital programme in line with latest cost projection	Introduced Revenue Funding to the Capital Programme. Reprofiled budget between 2020/21 and 2021/22 and additional WF EFAS grant	Roger Waters
Car Parks	76	-76	0	121	45	166	0	■	Update Capital programme in line with latest cost projection	Reprofile budget from 2020/21 into 2021/22	Roger Waters
Structures	5,613	-276	5,337	8,819	300	14,456	5,337	■	Update Capital programme in line with latest cost projection	Reprofile budget from 2020/21 into 2021/22	Roger Waters
Parks Structures	1,125	-408	717	1,163	0	1,880	717	■	Update Capital programme in line with latest cost projection	Reprofile budget from 2020/21 into 2021/22	Roger Waters
Street Lighting	278	-5	273	205	200	678	273				
Traffic Management	947	-239	708	278	160	1,146	708	■	Update Capital programme in line with latest cost projection	WG Local Sustainable Transport - Covid 19 Grant de-committed in 20/21	Roger Waters
Total Highways Technical Services	**16,128**	**1,843**	**17,971**	**16,988**	**1,805**	**36,764**	**17,971**				
Strategic Projects											
Transportation and Travel Schemes	2,585	1,352	3,937	3,172	0	7,109	3,937	■	Update Capital programme in line with latest cost projection	Introduced WG LTF Metro Plus Regional Grant in 2020/21	Roger Waters
Safe Routes in Communities	430	120	550	342	0	892	550	■	Update Capital programme in line with latest cost projection	Additional WG SRIC Grant added to 2020/21	Roger Waters
Transportation Infrastructure	6,149	1,265	7,414	15,798	25	23,237	7,414	■	Update Capital programme in line with latest cost projection	Additional WG LTF Grant introduced to 2020/21	Roger Waters
Drainage Improvements	7,324	-689	6,635	4,697	140	11,472	6,635	■	Update Capital programme in line with latest cost projection	Additional WG FCERM Grant introduced 2020/21	Roger Waters
Land Reclamation	7	1	8	0	0	8	8				
Total Strategic Projects	**16,495**	**2,049**	**18,544**	**24,009**	**165**	**42,718**	**18,544**				
Storm Dennis Flood Recovery											
Storm Dennis Flood Recovery	6,827	-472	6,355	1,793	**0**	8,148	6,355	■	Update Capital programme in line with latest cost projection	Reprofile budget from 2020/21 into 2021/22	Roger Waters
Total Storm Dennis Flood Recovery	**6,827**	**-472**	**6,355**	**1,793**	**0**	**8,148**	**6,355**				

Scheme	3 Year Capital Programme 2020 - 2023						2020/2021 Actual Spend as at 31st March 2021 £'000	Issues	Commentary	Management Action Agreed	Responsible Officer
	2020/2021 Budget as at 31st December 2020 £'000	2020/2021 Budget Variance £'000	2020/2021 Budget as at 31st March 2021 £'000	2021/2022 Budget £'000	2022/2023 Budget £'000	Total 3 Year Budget £'000					
Waste Strategy											
Waste Strategy	3,072	-14	3,058	1,463	0	4,521	3,058				
Total Waste Strategy	**3,072**	**-14**	**3,058**	**1,463**	**0**	**4,521**	**3,058**				
Fleet											
Vehicles	5,578	-528	5,050	2,674	1,573	9,297	5,050	■	Update Capital programme in line with latest cost projection	Reprofile budget from 2020/21 into 2021/22	Nigel Wheeler
Total Fleet	**5,578**	**-528**	**5,050**	**2,674**	**1,573**	**9,297**	**5,050**				
Buildings											
Buildings	157	1,028	1,185	257	100	1,542	1,185	■	Update Capital programme in line with latest cost projection	Introduction of additional insurance funding	Nigel Wheeler
Capitalised Equipment	0	45	45	0	0	45	45				
Total Buildings	**157**	**1,073**	**1,230**	**257**	**100**	**1,587**	**1,230**				
Total Frontline Services	**48,257**	**3,951**	**52,208**	**47,184**	**3,643**	**103,035**	**52,208**				
Group Total	**76,445**	**-2,835**	**73,610**	**77,891**	**11,113**	**162,614**	**73,610**				

Group Director   **Nigel Wheeler**
Head of Finance   **Martyn Hughes**

Scheme	3 Year Capital Programme 2020 - 2023						2020/2021 Actual Spend as at 31st March 2021 £'000	Issues	Commentary	Management Action Agreed	Responsible Officer
	2020/2021 Budget as at 31st December 2020 £'000	2020/2021 Budget Variance £'000	2020/2021 Budget as at 31st March 2021 £'000	2021/2022 Budget £'000	2022/2023 Budget £'000	Total 3 Year Budget £'000					
Schools											
Aberdare School & Sports Centre	9	-9	0	7	0	7	0				
School Modernisation Rhondda and Tonyrefail	4,624	-853	3,771	3,543	0	7,314	3,771	■	Update Capital programme in line with latest cost projection	Reprofile budget from 2020/21 into 2021/22	Chris Bradshaw
School Modernisation	1,159	-142	1,017	14,606	2,342	17,965	187	■	Update Capital programme in line with latest cost projection	Reprofile budget from 2020/21 into 2021/22	Chris Bradshaw
Cwmaman Community Primary School	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				
Ffynnon Taf Primary Refurbishment and Extension	539	-1	538	2,508	0	3,046	538				
St John Baptist Church in Wales High School	6	0	6	0	0	6	6				
Reducing Infant Class Sizes	940	-39	901	17	0	918	901				
SRIC - School Modernisation Programme	60	-6	54	571	0	625	54				
WG Welsh Medium Capital Grant	305	45	350	45	0	395	350				
WG Childcare Grant	2,553	-1,163	1,390	3,540	10	4,940	1,390	■	Update Capital programme in line with latest cost projection	Reprofile budget from 2020/21 into 2021/22	Chris Bradshaw
WG Flying Start	114	-38	76	55	0	131	76				
21st Century Schools Band B											
YGG Aberdar School Modernisation	139	96	235	4,126	22	4,383	235	■	Update Capital programme in line with latest cost projection	Reprofile budget from 2020/21 into 2021/22	Chris Bradshaw
Hirwaun Primary School	5,889	23	5,912	697	0	6,609	5,912				
Total	**16,337**	**-2,087**	**14,250**	**29,715**	**2,374**	**46,339**	**14,250**				

Scheme	3 Year Capital Programme 2020 - 2023						2020/2021 Actual Spend as at 31st March 2021 £'000	Issues	Commentary	Management Action Agreed	Responsible Officer
	2020/2021 Budget as at 31st December 2020 £'000	2020/2021 Budget Variance £'000	2020/2021 Budget as at 31st March 2021 £'000	2021/2022 Budget £'000	2022/2023 Budget £'000	Total 3 Year Budget £'000					
Supplementary Capital Programme											
Planned Kitchen Refurbishments	288	-75	213	435	200	848	213	■	Update Capital programme in line with latest cost projection	Reprofile budget from 2020/21 into 2021/22	Gaynor Davies
Window & Door Replacements	167	-104	63	634	150	847	63	■	Update Capital programme in line with latest cost projection	Reprofile budget from 2020/21 into 2021/22	Gaynor Davies
Essential Works	731	186	917	2,889	400	4,206	917	■	Update Capital programme in line with latest cost projection	Reprofile budget from 2020/21 into 2021/22	Gaynor Davies
Capitalisation of Computer HW / SW & Licences	225	2,589	2,814	292	250	3,356	2,814	■	Update Capital programme in line with latest cost projection	Reprofile budget from 2020/21 into 2021/22	Gaynor Davies
Roof Renewal	950	-325	625	1,572	700	2,897	625	■	Update Capital programme in line with latest cost projection	Reprofile budget from 2020/21 into 2021/22	Gaynor Davies
Boiler Replacement	350	154	504	322	250	1,076	504	■	Update Capital programme in line with latest cost projection	Reprofile budget from 2020/21 into 2021/22	Gaynor Davies
Equalities Act/Compliance Works	248	-75	173	358	225	756	173	■	Update Capital programme in line with latest cost projection	Reprofile budget from 2020/21 into 2021/22	Gaynor Davies
Education & Inclusion Services Condition Surveys	126	-126	0	110	50	160	0	■	Update Capital programme in line with latest cost projection	Reprofile budget from 2020/21 into 2021/22	Gaynor Davies
Electrical Rewiring	167	-30	137	283	200	620	137				
Asbestos Remediation Work	417	-416	1	2,600	900	3,501	1	■	Update Capital programme in line with latest cost projection	Reprofile budget from 2020/21 into 2021/22	Gaynor Davies
Fire Alarm Upgrades	122	-3	119	113	100	332	119				
Toilet Refurbishments	373	-60	313	1,245	350	1,908	313	■	Update Capital programme in line with latest cost projection	Reprofile budget from 2020/21 into 2021/22	Gaynor Davies
Schools Investment Programme	391	-188	203	0	0	203	203	■	Update Capital programme in line with latest cost projection	Reprofile budget from 2020/21 into 2021/22	Gaynor Davies
COVID Capital Works	0	433	433	1,000	0	1,433	433	■	Update Capital programme in line with latest cost projection	Reprofile budget from 2020/21 into 2021/22	Gaynor Davies
Improvements to Schools	100	127	227	100	100	427	227	■	Update Capital programme in line with latest cost projection	Reprofile budget from 2020/21 into 2021/22	Gaynor Davies
Capitalisation of Other Education Expenditure	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				
Total	**4,655**	**2,087**	**6,742**	**11,953**	**3,875**	**22,570**	**6,742**				
Group Total	**20,992**	**0**	**20,992**	**41,668**	**6,249**	**68,909**	**20,992**				

Director of Education and Inclusion Services   **Gaynor Davies**
Head of Finance   **Stephanie Davies**

Community and Children's Services

Section 3d

Scheme	3 Year Capital Programme 2020 - 2023						2020/2021 Actual Spend as at 31st March 2021 £'000	Issues	Commentary	Management Action Agreed	Responsible Officer
	2020/2021 Budget as at 31st December 2020 £'000	2020/2021 Budget Variance £'000	2020/2021 Budget as at 31st March 2021 £'000	2021/2022 Budget £'000	2022/2023 Budget £'000	Total 3 Year Budget £'000					
Adult & Children's Services											
Modernisation Programme (Adults)	3,006	-1,364	1,642	6,580	1,700	9,922	1,642	■	Update Capital programme in line with latest cost projection	Reprofile budget from 2020/21 into 2021/22	Neil Elliott
Modernisation Programme (Childrens)	435	-83	352	245	50	647	352	■	Update Capital programme in line with latest cost projection	Reprofile budget from 2020/21 into 2021/22	Annabel Lloyd
Asbestos Remediation	20	-20	0	90	45	135	0				
Telecare Equipment (Inc of Carelink Equipment)	179	196	375	302	200	877	375	■	Update Capital programme in line with latest cost projection	Introduced ICF Grant Funding.	Neil Elliott
Capitalisation of Computer HW / SW/Licences & Equipment	0	41	41	0	0	41	41				
Total Adult & Children's Services	**3,640**	**-1,230**	**2,410**	**7,217**	**1,995**	**11,622**	**2,410**				
Public Health, Protection & Community Services											
Leisure Centre Refurbishment Programme	499	-70	429	151	90	670	429	■	Update Capital programme in line with latest cost projection	Reprofile budget from 2020/21 into 2021/22	Dave Batten
Parks & Countryside	1,508	-528	980	1,466	100	2,546	980	■	Update Capital programme in line with latest cost projection	Reprofile budget from 2020/21 into 2021/22	Dave Batten
Rhondda Heritage Park	89	-2	87	0	0	87	87				
Play Areas	919	-188	731	795	50	1,576	731	■	Update Capital programme in line with latest cost projection	Reprofile budget from 2020/21 into 2021/22	Dave Batten
Cemeteries Planned Programme	233	-5	228	166	135	529	228				
Community Safety Initiatives	120	50	170	53	50	273	170	■	Update Capital programme in line with latest cost projection	Introduced additional WG SMAF Grant Funding	Louise Davies
Community Hubs	401	-242	159	458	0	617	159	■	Update Capital programme in line with latest cost projection	Reprofile budget from 2020/21 into 2021/22	Louise Davies
Culture	20	0	20	82	20	122	20				
Buildings	150	-141	9	188	50	247	9	■	Update Capital programme in line with latest cost projection	Reprofile budget from 2020/21 into 2021/22	Louise Davies
Total Public Health, Protection & Community Services	**3,939**	**-1,126**	**2,813**	**3,359**	**495**	**6,667**	**2,813**				
Group Total	**7,579**	**-2,356**	**5,223**	**10,576**	**2,490**	**18,289**	**5,223**				

Group Director   Paul Mee
Head of Finance   Neil Griffiths

Capital Programme from 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2023

Group	2020/21 £M	2021/22 £M	2022/23 £M	Total £M
Chief Executive	2.495	3.127	1.625	7.247
Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services	73.610	77.891	11.113	162.614
Education and Inclusion Services	20.992	41.668	6.249	68.909
Community and Children's Services	5.223	10.576	2.490	18.289
Total	**102.320**	**133.262**	**21.477**	**257.059**

Estimated Resources Required to Fund Capital Programme

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	Total
Supported Borrowing	6.829	6.873	6.873	20.575
Unsupported Borrowing	18.093	15.472	0.022	33.587
Total	**24.922**	**22.345**	**6.895**	**54.162**

Capital Grants

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	Total
General Capital Grant annual base allocation	0.164	8.104	4.112	12.380
General Capital Grant additional allocation 2020/21	1.465	1.227		2.692
General Capital Grant additional allocation 2021/22		2.779		2.779
WEFO ERDF Modern Industrial Units Developments	2.636	2.492	0.082	5.210
WG Targeted Regeneration Investment (TRI) Programme	1.656	0.366	0.000	2.022
WG Enabling Natural Resources and Wellbeing	0.004	0.099		0.103
WG Valleys Regional Park Discovery Gateways Capital Grant	1.034	0.473		1.507
WG Transforming Towns - Green Infrastructure & Biodiversity	0.035			0.035
WG Valleys Taskforce RCT+ Empty Homes Grant Ph1 & Ph2	1.245	8.527		9.772
WG Valleys Taskforce Regional	0.100	0.479		0.579
WG Local Transport Fund	9.411	1.470		10.881
WG Active Travel Fund	0.747	2.644		3.391
WG Active Travel Fund Core Allocation	0.319	1.123		1.442
WG Local Transport Network Fund	1.105			1.105
WG Local Road Refurbishment Grant	1.261	1.260		2.521
WG Safe Routes In The Community	0.500	0.342		0.842
WG Road Safety Grant	0.162	0.093		0.255
WG Local Sustainable Transport Covid Response	0.331			0.331
WG Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Grant	3.206	1.093		4.299
WG Strategic Flood Risk Area	0.015			0.015
WG Flood Recovery Funding	6.355	1.793		8.148
WG Emergency Financial Assistance Scheme	0.451			0.451
WG Resilient Roads Fund	4.874	2.750		7.624
WG Museums, Archives & Libraries Division	0.077	0.128		0.205
WG Welsh Medium Capital Grant	0.350	0.045		0.395
WG Circular Economy Fund	2.086			2.086
WG Absorbent Hygiene Product (AHP) Waste Programme in Wales Grant	0.544			0.544
WG 21st Century Schools	5.664	7.184	2.202	15.050
WG 21st Century Schools & Education Programme - Community Hubs Capital Scheme	0.232	0.406		0.638
WG Access Improvement Grants	0.067			0.067
WG Reducing Infant Class Sizes	0.370	0.006		0.376
WG Waste & Resource Efficiency	0.094			0.094
Substance Misuse Grant (WG)	0.101			0.101
WG Flying Start Grant	0.398	0.125		0.523
WG Childcare Offer Capital Grant Programme	1.493	3.409		4.902
WG Capital Funding Grant Towards School Maintenance Budgets	4.045			4.045
WG Hwb in Schools Infrastructure Grant	2.500			2.500
WG WLGA COVID Grant	0.414			0.414
WG ENABLE	0.276			0.276
WG Local Places for Nature Grant	0.085			0.085
Grantscape Windfarm Community Benefit Fund	0.000	0.017		0.017
WG Smart Living WBRID	0.100			0.100
Heritage Lottery Grant	0.010			0.010
Sport Wales Grant	0.012			0.012
All Wales Play Opportunity Grant	0.248			0.248
Intergrated Care Fund	1.506	0.042		1.548
Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Voilence	0.016			0.016
Transforming Towns Covid Recovery Grant	0.003			0.003
Total	**57.767**	**48.476**	**6.396**	**112.639**

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	Total
Third Party Contributions	**4.907**	**1.601**	**0.010**	**6.518**

Council Resources

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	Total
Revenue Contributions	14.209	41.577	4.261	60.047
General Fund Capital Resources	0.515	19.263	3.915	23.693
Total	**14.724**	**60.840**	**8.176**	**83.740**

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	Total
Total Resources Required to Fund Capital Programme	**102.320**	**133.262**	**21.477**	**257.059**

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	Total
Difference Total Spend to Total Resources	**0.000**	**0.000**	**0.000**	**0.000**

Prudential Indicators 2020/21 (as at 31st March 2021)

Indicator	2020/21 Actual as at 31st March £'000	2020/21 Outturn as at 31st March £'000	2020/21 Estimate / Limit £'000	Comments
Indicator: Limits to Borrowing Activity (Net Borrowing)				
Gross Borrowing	333,680	333,680	419,686	Gross borrowing should not exceed the Council's Capital Financing requirement.
Capital Financing Requirement	504,848	504,848	515,651	
Indicator: The Authorised Limit				
Gross Borrowing	333,226	333,226	530,000	The limit beyond which borrowing is prohibited.
Other long term liabilities	454	454	2,000*	
Indicator: The Operational Boundary				
Gross Borrowing	333,226	333,226	425,000	This indicator acts as a warning signal to protect the authorised limit.
Other long term liabilities	454	454	1,000*	

*Estimates / Limits for other long term liabilities were amended in the 2020/21 Mid Year Treasury Management Stewardship Report approved by Council on 25th November 2020.

Indicator	2020/21 Actual as at 31st March	2020/21 Outturn as at 31st March	2020/21 Estimate / Limit	Comments
Indicator: Maturity Structure				
Under 12 months	13%	13%	0% - 70%	These limits protect the Council from being exposed to large fixed rate loans becoming repayable and due for refinancing within similar timescales.
12 months to 2 years	4%	4%	0% - 70%	
2 years to 5 years	10%	10%	0% - 60%	
5 years to 10 years	16%	16%	0% - 70%	
10 years to 20 years	6%	6%	0% - 90%	
20 Year to 30 years	0%	0%	0% - 90%	
30 years to 40 years	51%	51%	0% - 90%	
40 years to 50 years	0%	0%	0% - 90%	
Indicator: Total principal funds invested				
Maximum invested over 1 yr	£6.30 million	£6.30 million **	£25 million	To ensure that day to day cash-flow requirements are not compromised by investing for long periods.

**The total value of the investment at 31st March 2021 is £6.65 million of which £0.35 million is being repaid in one year.

Summary of Council Sickness Absence by Group and Service Area

QUARTER 4 2020/21	% Total	% <28 Days	% >28 Days	Staff Turnover
COUNCIL WIDE (Headcount 10,888)	**3.96**	**0.89**	**3.07**	**6.84% 745**
COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES (Headcount 2,946)	**6.14**	**1.25**	**4.89**	**6.59% 194**
PROSPERITY, DEVELOPMENT & FRONTLINE SERVICES (Headcount 941)	**4.99**	**0.87**	**4.12**	**6.70% 63**
EDUCATION & INCLUSION SERVICES (Headcount 1,258)	**3.20**	**0.71**	**2.49**	**6.52% 82**
SCHOOLS (Headcount 4,873)	**2.88**	**0.77**	**2.11**	**7.47% 364**
CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S DIVISION (Headcount 870)	**2.62**	**0.59**	**2.03**	**4.83% 42**

COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES	% Total	% <28 Days	% >28 Days	Staff Turnover
Total (Headcount 2,946)	**6.14**	**1.25**	**4.89**	**6.59% 194**
Accommodation Services (Headcount 513)	**12.10**	**2.48**	**9.62**	**6.82% 35**
Adult Direct Services (and Group Director) (Headcount 172)	**7.70**	**1.24**	**6.46**	**5.81% 10**
Adult Short Term Intervention (Headcount 530)	**8.22**	**1.95**	**6.27**	**9.06% 48**
Adult Social Work Services (Headcount 181)	**5.50**	**1.01**	**4.49**	**5.52% 10**
Business Support Adults (Headcount 13)	**0.39**	**0.39**	**0.00**	**7.69% 1**
Children's Services[1] (Headcount 594)	**5.28**	**0.79**	**4.49**	**6.37% 37**
Public Health & Protection & Community Services (Headcount 888)	**2.03**	**0.51**	**1.52**	**5.97% 53**
Safeguarding[2] (Headcount 16)	**1.50**	**1.02**	**0.48**	**0.00% 0**
Transformation (Headcount 52)	**4.09**	**0.51**	**3.58**	**1.92% 1**

[1] Includes Children's Commissioning Consortium Cymru (Headcount 12)

[2] Includes Regional Commissioning Unit (Headcount 3)

PROSPERITY, DEVELOPMENT & FRONTLINE SERVICES	% Total	% <28 Days	% >28 Days	Staff Turnover
Total (Headcount 941)	**4.99**	**0.87**	**4.12**	**6.70% 63**
Frontline Services (and Group Director) (Headcount 837)	**5.27**	**0.92**	**4.35**	**6.82% 57**
Prosperity & Development (Headcount 104)	**2.71**	**0.41**	**2.30**	**5.77% 6**

EDUCATION & INCLUSION SERVICES	% Total	% <28 Days	% >28 Days	Staff Turnover
Total (Headcount 1,258)	**3.20**	**0.71**	**2.49**	**6.52% 82**
Education Improvement & Inclusion Services (and Group Director) (Headcount 208)	**3.24**	**0.77**	**2.47**	**9.13% 19**
21st Century Schools (Headcount 1,050)	**3.18**	**0.69**	**2.49**	**6.00% 63**

SCHOOLS	% Total	% <28 Days	% >28 Days	Staff Turnover
Total (Headcount 4,873)	**2.88**	**0.77**	**2.11**	**7.47% 364**
Primary Schools (Headcount 3,043)	**3.21**	**0.82**	**2.39**	**7.49% 228**
Secondary Schools (Headcount 1,830)	**2.33**	**0.69**	**1.64**	**7.43% 136**

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S DIVISION	% Total	% <28 Days	% >28 Days	Staff Turnover
Total (Headcount 870)	**2.62**	**0.59**	**2.03**	**4.83% 42**
Cabinet Office & Public Relations (and Chief Executive) (Headcount 27)	**0.79**	**0.21**	**0.58**	**3.70% 1**
Corporate Estates (Headcount 81)	**2.65**	**0.41**	**2.24**	**4.94% 4**
Financial & Digital Services (Headcount 276)	**3.03**	**0.75**	**2.28**	**6.88% 19**
Human Resources (Headcount 446)	**2.59**	**0.58**	**2.01**	**3.81% 17**
Legal Services (Headcount 40)	**1.39**	**0.27**	**1.12**	**2.50% 1**

STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER UPDATES 2020/21

Strategic Risk Register	COUNCIL PRIORITY	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	RISK DESCRIPTION	CONTROLS & ACTIONS	Risk Rating QTR 4			QTR 4 Year End UPDATE 2020/21
					I	L	RATING	
1	LIVING WITHIN OUR MEANS	Barrie Davies	If the Council does not ensure that the investment and financial planning decisions are aimed at long term stability and sustainability, it will be unable to deliver effective services to residents and businesses within the County Borough.	**CONTROLS** • Decision making arrangements need to demonstrate links with the Council's Corporate Plan priorities (that are themselves aligned to the Well-being of Future Generations Act); • Investment and financial planning decisions are subject to Cabinet approval and where appropriate pre-scrutiny; and • A requirement for the Council to forecast its revenue budget over the medium term and set a rolling three year Capital Programme. **ACTIONS** • Budget holders and Finance / Performance officers working together to ensure: - Robust and deliverable annual revenue budgets and 3 year capital programme are set taking into account Corporate Plan priorities. o In year operational performance results are in line with targets and the agreed capital / revenue resources and additional investment funding approved. o The Council's year-end Statement of Accounts (SoA) receive an unqualified opinion (i.e. clean bill of health) and General Balances are at an appropriate level as determined by the Responsible Finance Office i.e. a minimum of £10M. • The public reporting of financial and operational performance information during the year to enable results to be scrutinised and designated elected members and officers held to account; and • Applying a medium term financial planning approach to service planning to enable the Council to effectively plan future service delivery in line with expected resources available.	5	4	20	ORIGINAL RISK RATING 5x4=20 The year-end Performance Report for 2020/21 shows a revenue budget overspend of £0.204M (a 0.04% variance against a total net revenue budget of £508.747M) and significant Capital Programme investment of £102M. With regard to the Revenue Budget position, this takes account of additional one-off Welsh Government funding claimed during the year (£50M via the Covid-19 Hardship Fund), and also reflects the continuation of key budget pressures particularly across Adult Services and Children's Services. It will be critically important that additional Welsh Government funding to address 'core' cost pressures remains in place for 2021/22 and beyond, for example, across social care services, together with additional Covid-19 funding to fund additional expenditure and income losses as a direct result of the pandemic. There has been a continued focus on Medium Term Financial Planning (MTFP) to help ensure the on-going delivery of robust financial and service planning arrangements now and into the future, and continued investment in essential services in line with Corporate Plan priorities. The current MTFP forecasts a financial outlook that remains extremely challenging and an updated MTFP is in the process of being finalised for reporting to elected Members in July 2021. The well embedded arrangements of robust financial and service management will be critical in continuing to support the Council in navigating its way through an unprecedented period and maximising all opportunities to support our residents and businesses to recover from the impact of the pandemic. This will include: delivering a balanced budget for 2021/22; continuing to claim Welsh Government funding for eligible additional costs and income losses as a result of the pandemic and also seeking additional funding via Welsh Government to support on-going capital infrastructure repair costs following significant storm damage (e.g. Storm Dennis); identifying further opportunities for on-going investment in Corporate Plan priority areas (including Levelling Up funding); and progressing the formulation of a draft 2022/23 budget strategy (on the basis of the continued delivery of budget savings). No change to the risk rating.
2	PEOPLE	Annabel Lloyd	If the priorities for Children's Services (CiN, CPR & CLA) are not managed effectively then the ability of the Council to effectively support vulnerable children and families and meet the requirements of the Social Services & Wellbeing (Wales) Act may be compromised.	**CONTROLS** • C&S – monitored through Children Services Management Team on a quarterly bases. • CP: Monitored through the Cwm Taf Safeguarding Quality Assurance Group that reports to the Safeguarding Board on a quarterly bases. • CLA: Monitored through the CLA Strategic Group and CLA Quality Assurance Group that meets monthly. **ACTIONS** • CLA - plan in place to continue to work to reducing CLA. This covers close monitoring of those who come into the system and those who need to leave the system. This includes putting in systems that challenges decision making at relevant points in process, auditing, monitoring and analysis trends. • CP - the quality assurance group have a plan of auditing a number of aspects of those children on the child protection register that fall into a number of identified categories: i.e. those who have been on the register for over a year. • C&S – Plan to redesign the delivery of Early Intervention Services (Resilience Families Programme) to look at how early intervention services are delivered.	5	3	15	ORIGINAL RISK RATING: 5x3=15 The likely mid-term impact of the Pandemic for vulnerable families means that we are unable to alter the risk rating. We continue to see an increase in the number of children and families accessing services. Due to the complexity of needs, families require services longer which puts continued pressures on services across Children's Services. Although we have seen a 20% decrease in the rate of children becoming looked after, the impact of Covid 19 means that looked after numbers are affected by greater difficulty in working with families on safe exits from the looked after system, and both placement availability and stability are affected, most significantly for those young people with most complex needs. The cost of care has, and will continue to increase. The rate of referral has now increased, demand is growing, and recruitment and retention in frontline social work services remains challenging. Preventative face to face work with families in stepping up, albeit every effort to work by phone and video is being deployed. The impact for vulnerable families of having to stay at home is likely to lead to an increase in demand for preventative and statutory children's services in the mid term.
3	PEOPLE	Neil Elliott	The changing demographics and potential increase in demand to social services may impact on the ability of the Council to safeguard its vulnerable adults and keep citizens independent for longer. If we do not continue to modernise services (working with partners including Health and Third Sector) in line with the SS@WB Act this may result in inappropriate care and support and increased costs of providing services.	**CONTROLS** The multi-agency Transformational Leadership and Strategic Partnership groups are now in place reporting to the Cwm Taff Social Services & Wellbeing Board and Cwm Taff Public Service Board to maximise integration opportunities across the region. **ACTIONS** • Stay well @ Home Service in place • Statement of Intent for Older People's Services • Population needs assessments • Adult Services Improvement/development plans being developed with partners focusing on early intervention, prevention and support.	5	3	15	ORIGINAL RISK RATING: 5x3=15 No change in risk rating this quarter. Quarter 4 has again been dominated by our continued response to COVID-19 across Adult Services and our main priorities remained the same as in previous quarters; namely, to: • support and safeguard our most vulnerable people and their carers to stay safe and well in the community • respond to critical and immediate care and support requirements • work with partners to support timely and safe discharge from hospital • support our care providers to deliver quality and safe services and to respond to COVID-19 risks • refocus community services to respond quickly to help people who may be isolated and in need of support There continues to be some temporary disruption to services while we continue to prioritise care and support offers, based on assessed need and risk. Workloads remain high and caseloads are becoming increasingly more complex as the current COVID-19 pandemic continues and there is a waiting list of cases awaiting allocation in some areas. Additional external support continues to be commissioned to reduce backlogs. All our care and support services are under regular review with the aim of ensuring people receive the care and support based on their assessed need and risk. However, plans are being put in place to reopen more services on a phased basis as Covid-19 lockdown restrictions ease.
6	LIVING WITHIN OUR MEANS	Tim Jones	If the Council does not manage its information assets in accordance with requirements set down within legislation then it may be faced with financial penalties and possible sanctions that hinder service delivery.	**CONTROLS** • Governance Structures are in place and the Council has a designated SIRO. • Policies and Procedures are in place. • Designated team in place that provides on-going training and also undertake investigations that involve potential breaches. • External Reviews & Accreditation e.g. PSN, PCI, WAO. **ACTIONS** • GDPR gap analysis to be completed in readiness for May 2018. • Continue to review technology measures and update as necessary. • Continue to investigate and report potential events/incidents. • Continue with external reviews and attain accreditations for PSN/PCI. • Deliver risk-based training / regular communication, face to face and via e-learning, staffing bulletins, global emails.	5	2	10	ORIGINAL RISK RATING: 4x3=12 The Information Management Team continues to provide specialist advice, information and support to Services during the quarter, ensuring that any new or change to business processes as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and alternative working arrangements are GDPR compliant - thus minimising the risk of a personal data breach and enforcement action by the Information Commissioner. Operationally a key focus remains to support incident response and investigation. Cyber Security communications have been increased following reports of external attacks to government, local authorities and Schools. The Council is continuing with its proactive approach to mitigate risk around cyber security. Key deliverables during the quarter include: • Lead organisation for the National All Wales TTP Data Mapping group. • Development and review of data sharing agreements and protocols to support COVID-19. • PSN Remedial Action Plan priorities completed to enable submission during Qtr 1 (21/22). • Project initiation to rollout out software to further protect the Council against a Ransomware attack. • Password Management Standard strengthened in line with industry recommended best practice. Technical implementation of new standard tested for deployment to Users during Qtr 1 (21/22)

Strategic Risk Register	COUNCIL PRIORITY	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	RISK DESCRIPTION	CONTROLS & ACTIONS	Risk Rating QTR 4			QTR 4 Year End UPDATE 2020/21
					I	L	RATING	
11	PROSPERITY	Simon Gale	If projects aimed at regenerating the local communities through the Council's investment programme are not planned, procured and managed effectively by the Council, then delivery could be severely compromised and the benefits lost.	**CONTROLS and ACTIONS** Robust service delivery arrangements and governance structures are in place to ensure the successful delivery of key strategic regenerations projects. This includes: • Developing effective business cases for individual projects to ensure they are viable and cost effective. • Involving stakeholders to support the delivery of key interventions from across the Council, other public Bodies, Welsh Government and the private sector. • Establishing project boards responsible for overseeing the delivery of individual projects. • A Project Protocol which is made available for project development and implementation that identifies the mechanisms needed to structure successful project delivery. • The establishment of an External Funding Officer Group which reviews externally funded project activity across the Council at least quarterly. • Regular update reports considered by SLT and the Council's Cabinet • **ACTIONS** • To ensure that all projects adhere to the project protocol procedures the completion of which is overseen by Officers from Regeneration and Finance. • To ensure that all such funding bids are compliant with funding terms and conditions.	4	4	16	ORIGINAL RISK RATING: 4x3=12 No change from the previous quarter It has been necessary to upgrade the risk rating (as per the Quarter 1 Performance Report) as a result of the presence of the coronavirus pandemic and the real risk this presents to the ability to deliver schemes on time and on budget. Nevertheless, the Prosperity and Development Service has continued to deliver/co-ordinate the largest economic investment programme in the Council's history. Despite the coronavirus lockdown, and through working closely with our contractors, significant progress has still been made on the delivery of key regeneration projects as set out in the Service's delivery plan although there have been some inevitable delays. This includes the redevelopment of Taff Vale, the development of light industrial business units at Robertstown and Coed Ely, and the delivery of the objectives set out in the Council's five strategic opportunity areas and town centre masterplans. All projects and programmes have established robust service delivery arrangements and governance structures, which is ensuring the successful management of these schemes.
13	PEOPLE	Paul Mee	If the resources the Council has available are reduced or not targeted in a coherent way that meets need, then the ability to tackle the root causes of poverty and help build sustainable and resilient communities through an early intervention and preventative approach may be compromised thereby creating greater pressure on statutory services, and thereby reducing the impact on wellbeing priorities.	**CONTROLS** The following controls have been put in place to manage risk: • Delegated team in place to manage risk. • Regular monitoring of tackling poverty grants to ensure compliance, impact and value for money. • Regular meetings with Welsh Government as part of the Building Resilient Communities national work programme. • Liaising with Cabinet Members to provide regular updates. **ACTIONS** To develop and deliver services that focus on building more involved and resilient communities to tackle poverty and promote well-being. This includes: • Implementing the recommendations following a review into all Families First Commissioned services, with a focus on prevention, integration, collaboration and involvement (5 ways of working). • Implementation of the Team around the Family review recommendations in order to improve the long term prospects of the family and prevent problems from escalating. • Implement a revised Communities First programme in line with Welsh Government priorities for 2017/18.	5	4	20	ORIGINAL RISK RATING: 5x2=10 During quarter 4, detailed spending plans and business cases have been submitted across the Community & Children Grant (CCG) and Housing Support Grant (HSG) funding programmes. Additional funding was allocated to the HSG and this has been allocated with spend plans submitted to and supported by WG, although some further confirmations are expected during quarter 1 of next financial year. At this stage no change is proposed to the risk rating.
14	PROSPERITY	Gaynor Davies	More comprehensive schools than ever are facing a financial deficit as they seek to maintain sixth form provision with falling pupil numbers and funding. This could have an adverse impact on KS3 & 4 provision. If schools reduce teaching capacity to help deliver the savings required to manage deficits, then the ability to deliver positive educational outcomes at KS 3 & 4 may be compromised in the medium to longer term.	**CONTROLS** • Open communication with Head teachers. • Support available from key officers from within the Council. **ACTIONS** • Liaise with all Head teachers to communicate the financial pressures that the Council is under and re-iterate their involvement in aiming to realise more efficient working practices. • Work with Schools in order to identify possible areas to increase efficiency.	4	4	16	ORIGINAL RISK RATING: 4x3=12 Schools have made good progress with their budget deficit recovery plans and progress continues to be closely monitored as part of the Council's Budget Deficit Protocol. Schools have also benefitted from some additional grant funding streams. We now have confirmed dates for the removal of 6th forms in 3 comprehensive schools and this has enabled schools to plan effectively. Other financial pressures are likely in future as the impact of the pandemic on learner outcomes becomes known; in the short term additional Welsh Government funding is in place to assist in meeting this need and the Council and Welsh Government will continue to work closely together to assess impact / financial implications on an on-going basis.
15	PLACES	Nigel Wheeler	The Council has a comprehensive highways infrastructure that relies on many significant structures such as bridges and retaining walls to ensure constant traffic movement. Many of these structures are of a considerable age and the risk of potential failure, which results in road closures, is significant. If unforeseen road closures occur then these can have a major impact on local communities and the local economy.	**CONTROLS** • Routine monitoring of the entire highways network. • Regular reports to SLT & Cabinet. • We have appointed a additional staff; this means we have appropriate in-house capability to manage this complex and significant asset. **ACTIONS** • Invest additional monies in road, highways infrastructure and pavement networks over the next four years, on top of the previous investment since 2011. • Provide an up date on the impact of key investment projects in 2016/17/18 through the investment programme • Provide an up date to Scrutiny Committee on delivery of the Highways / Transportation infrastructure investment programme. • Review and update the Highways Asset Management Plan (HAMP) to ensure that the principal assets have been identified and form part of the Plan, and relevant document and service standards agreed.	4	2	8	ORIGINAL RISK RATING: 4x2=8 The level of risk remains unchanged due to the comprehensive programme of work for structures, retaining walls and bridges both on the Highway network and in parks. The Highways Project Board (HPB) monitors the investment that is evidencing on-going improvement to the network; there are however challenges in terms of recruiting qualified staff (when competing with the private sector) and limited numbers of both consultants and contractors to support our staff. The HPB will continue to monitor these issues and ensure the capital programme is delivered and the highway network effectively maintained. No change to risk rating.
18	LIVING WITHIN OUR MEANS	Richard Evans	If the Council does not develop and invest in its staff, transforming the way it delivers its services to meet future demographic and financial pressures will be more difficult. It will also have an adverse impact on the retention and recruitment of staff.	**CONTROLS** • Workforce planning arrangements are in place that aim to identify possible gaps now and in the future. • Staff consultation and communication. **ACTIONS** • Continue with the apprenticeship and graduate schemes and ensure that placements are focussed on areas where workforce planning issues may become apparent in the future. • Review training that is available to staff and ensure that it is suitable.	4	3	12	ORIGINAL RISK RATING 4x3=12 All posts recruited to for last quarter as previously reported below: - 12 Apprentices started in September 2020, 17 in January 2021 and 4 due to start February 2021 – Total 33 - 21 Graduates started in October 2020 with a further 5 starting Jan/Feb 2021 – Total – 26. Currently recruiting for 15 graduate posts and 25 apprentices. Staff training programmes continue to be delivered virtually.

Strategic Risk Register	COUNCIL PRIORITY	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	RISK DESCRIPTION	CONTROLS & ACTIONS	Risk Rating QTR 4			QTR 4 Year End UPDATE 2020/21
					I	L	RATING	
20	LIVING WITHIN OUR MEANS	Tim Jones	If the Council's I.T infrastructure is not continuously reviewed to confirm that it is fit for business use and secure, then access to information and systems could be hindered, by for example cyber risk/attack, resulting in interruption to service delivery.	CONTROLS • Disaster Recovery Plan in place should an interruption be experienced. • Digital Strategy – Infrastructure Theme/Plan. • Governance Structure. • Policies and Procedures in place e.g. patch management, change control. • External Reviews & Accreditation e.g. PSN, PCI, WAO, 3rd party suppliers. • Staff Training / 3rd Party Support Contracts. ACTIONS • Refresh & upgrade end of life infrastructure & software. • Prepare for the PSN inspection. • Monitor and measure Infrastructure Availability & Performance. • Implement recommendations from external review / accreditation. • Train Staff in order to ensure that they have the appropriate skills to use new systems and software.	5	4	20	ORIGINAL RISK RATING: 5x3=15 The migration to the Data Centre is 90% complete. Final stages are unable to be completed due to continued work toward Covid19 measures and an increased focus on uptime and service provision. A plan is in place to complete this as part of Service Recovery and also to add greater resilience (the additional resilience to be built into Ty Elai for increased local resilience and for faster DR capability). The Ty Elai DR project is in progress, with its target date to finish revised for completion and to decommission the aged Ty Bronwydd facility by the end of the Q2 2021. The migration of the Council's email users to the O365 cloud and non-required Citrix users to the VPN solution have been completed and should provide greater resilience, whilst mitigating local risk. Schools baseline infrastructure HWB programme still running in line with WG agreed plans and due for completion in Q2 2021. PSN plan in place to meet the end of year timeframe for renewal. The Council is continuing with its proactive approach to mitigate increased risk around cyber security. Recruitment underway to build a Cyber Security team Performance Information Q4 Key Applications / Servers Availability 99.92% WAN Availability 99.91%
21	LIVING WITHIN OUR MEANS	Chris Bradshaw	Given the shift in approach to services being delivered on a regional footprint, if services are delivered to citizens and staff of Rhondda Cynon Taf using this method, then appropriate arrangements must be in place to ensure that the interests of all current stakeholders are appropriately represented and that service delivery does not fall / suffer.	CONTROLS Legal agreements between local authorities are in place; Governance and scrutiny functions in place; Regular reporting of performance is available.	5	3	15	ORIGINAL RISK RATING: 5x3=15 The Council and its partners continue to collaborate effectively to respond to the pandemic, but also are exploring how we worked together to respond to the clear health inequalities that prevail in Cwm Taf Morgannwg compared to other regions of Wales. The Welsh Government also has passed legislation to create Corporate Joint Committees, with the CJC for SE Wales on the Cardiff Capital region footprint. The model is currently being developed by WG and further guidance and information will be made available in due course. The CJC's will focus on regional delivery of services, the vast majority of which are services over and above that normally provided by individual local authorities, which could include services devolved from Welsh Government such as Inward Investment and business support.
22	LIVING WITHIN OUR MEANS	Chris Bradshaw	The risk of a No Deal Brexit seems ever more likely and whilst the Council can put contingency arrangements in place to manage some impacts of a No Deal these arrangements are temporary. Therefore, there will be economic and other risks that could materialise that are outside of our control, which will impact on the Council and local community.	CONTROLS - The Council's Senior Leadership Team (SLT) led by the Chief Executive are leading on issues relating to Brexit - Dedicated Lead Brexit Officer and Cabinet Member have been identified to monitor progress on Brexit and manage risk. - Regular updates reported to Elected Members, SLT and Cabinet. ACTIONS - Collaborate with the WLGA through the Brexit Transition Support Programme, set up to help local authorities prepare for Brexit. - Complete the WAO call for evidence and self assessment in relation to Brexit Preparedness. - Implementation of the self assessment findings.	5	4	20	ORIGINAL RISK RATING: 5x2=10 The initial impact of Brexit on the Council has been minimal. There has been a few delays in accessing material supplies for the construction industry but nothing significant that has disrupted our day to day operations.
23	PROSPERITY	Chris Bradshaw/Gaynor Davies	If projects are not delivered on time and/or on budget then this could impede the delivery and intended (positive) impact of the 21st Century Schools Band B Programme within the Council.	CONTROLS • A designated project board is in place that oversees the delivery of the Council's 21st Century programme. • Regular updates are reported to the Welsh Government. • Individual projects are managed using PRINCE2 methodology. ACTIONS • Submission and approval of all business cases within Band B of the 21st Century Schools Programme.	5	3	15	ORIGINAL RISK RATING: 5x3=15 Significant progress is being made on the second wave of school investments in Band B, including completion of the first phase of works at Ffynnon Taf primary school and work commencing at YGG Aberdar and YG Rhydywaun. Projects in the greater Pontypridd area are also underway, with 3 projects out to tender and 2 in the design phase. Revisions to timescales have been necessary for some projects in the greater Pontypridd area, as a result of the Judicial Review, and the removal of 6th form has been unavoidably delayed to 2024 in two settings and 2023 in one faith setting following Welsh Government approval. The financial implications of Covid-19 on contractor costs / building materials are also being closely monitored and will be assessed and reported on an on-going basis as part of the robust project management arrangements in place.
24	PEOPLE, PLACES & PROSPERITY	Chris Bradshaw	Given the expectations placed upon the Council to become net zero by 2050 in respect of its carbon emissions, if residents and businesses do not actively engage with the Council and Welsh Government to reduce their energy consumption, reduce their use of plastics, and adopt sustainable approaches to travel, then the full benefits will not materialise.	The Council's approach to implementing net zero has been set out in the report presented to Cabinet at its meeting held on 18th June 2019. CONTROLS Using the information that we have available to calculate a baseline. Regular monitoring & reporting arrangements have now been put in place to monitor delivery of the detailed actions outlined within the Cabinet report noted above. ACTIONS Calculating a baseline of the Council's Carbon and other greenhouse gases will enable the Council to identify short term and long term actions to change the way we work, procure and deliver our services, and highlight those changes that will have the greatest effect on reducing the Council's carbon footprint. Detailed actions are contained within the report presented to Cabinet, and these are not fully replicated in this document. They cover the following main headings. • **Energy & Energy Efficiency** • **Vehicles & Mobility** • **Greening Our Local Environment** SUMMARY The Council's Corporate Plan – The Way Ahead 2016-2020, will need to be replaced in March 2020 and a new Corporate Plan produced for the next five years. It is proposed that the Council's response to the Committee on Climate Change report is incorporated into the new Corporate Plan and is taken into account in preparing the Council's Medium term Financial Plan for the period 2020/2023.	5	4	20	ORIGINAL RISK RATING: 5x4=20 The Council's original commitment to net Zero was agreed by Cabinet in June 2019 CONTROLS The cross party Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group is continuing to work to strengthen the planning and monitoring arrangements for meeting the Council's carbon reduction commitments. The Group also includes representatives from community groups. ACTIONS The Council's new Corporate Plan 2020-24 - 'Making a Difference' reinforces the Council's commitment to reducing its Carbon footprint and in its Community Leadership role encouraging, supporting and facilitating community action to reduce carbon across the County Borough. More detailed actions and targets continue to emerge through the Steering Group. New officer working groups have been put in place to focus on key decarbonisation projects. These projects will support the work of the Steering Group and inform the Council's Climate Change/Decarbonisation strategy and the detailed plans for its delivery. A draft Climate Change Strategy has been prepared and is being consulted upon with residents, businesses and the wider community to seek views on the Council's commitments to reduce its carbon footprint. The findings from this 'Let's Talk' conversation following the Council's engagement with residents on the Council's draft Climate Change Strategy and Electric Vehicle charging points together with the Council's first Carbon Footprint calculation are currently being considered by Members. Plans to conduct further face to face engagement with residents and communities are being developed. Further work is being undertaken in respect of Electric Vehicle Charging, Biodiversity, green energy production, carbon sequestration through repairing peat bogs and creating more woodlands, and working with organisations that supply our goods and services to ensure they are focused on reducing their carbon footprint. The Council is also working with the other local authorities in South East Wales on opportunities to test and purchase electric heavy goods vehicles, to create significant green energy production through Fusion, and tidal lagoons working with UK and welsh governments. The Chief Executive sits on the Local Government Decarbonisation Strategy Panel convened by Welsh Government to support the implementation of its strategy 'Prosperity for All: A Low Carbon Wales' and its response to the more recent report from the Climate Change Committee, 'The Path to Net Zero' and progress on reducing emissions in Wales

Strategic Risk Register	COUNCIL PRIORITY	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	RISK DESCRIPTION	CONTROLS & ACTIONS	Risk Rating QTR 4			QTR 4 Year End UPDATE 2020/21
					I	L	RATING	

25	PEOPLE, PLACES & PROSPERITY	Chris Bradshaw/Paul Mee	The impact of the global Covid 19 pandemic arising from coronavirus is continuing to principally effect the health and economic well-being of the County Borough. The Council reconfigured services to deliver essential support to vulnerable people during the early lockdown phases and is now making good progress in implementing Recovery Plans to open up other services, safely, within Welsh Government guidelines. Covid-19 is still with us and will be until such time as an effective vaccine is available. There are three separate but connected risks.
			
			- If there is a resurgence of the virus in RCT then the Council, and its key partners such as the UHB, Police and PHW, must take immediate steps to put in place controls and enforcement measures to limit the spread of infection, to protect communities, support businesses and alleviate
			
			- The pandemic has changed the way in which people live their lives, from shopping, to working, to travelling, often as a result of digital alternatives. This has had an adverse effect on local businesses, in particular sectors such as retail and hospitality. The risk is that town centres and other key retail locations become redundant and neglected as businesses fail. The Council working with local businesses and partners need to respond to these lifestyle changes by supporting and facilitating the economic development and resurgence of local businesses and town centres; and also modernising public services.
			
			- Longer term, the Council must ensure it learns from the Covid-19 pandemic and is better placed to plan and prepare its services to residents and businesses in the event of future pandemics in order to minimise the significant cumulative effect on the Social, Economic, Environmental and Cultural well-being of the County Borough
				The Council's ongoing approach to managing its response to the Covid-19 pandemic has been set out in the reports presented to Cabinet on 21 May, 25 June, 28 July and the Leader's Executive Decision on 14 August in respect of the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Covid 19 Prevention & Response Plan.
				
				CONTROLS
				• The Chief Executive is part of the joint Cwm Taf Morgannwg UHB Health Board and Local Authorities Group.
				• Director of Public Health, Protection & Community services is a member the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Strategic Regional Oversight Group and is currently the Regional Lead for Contact Tracing and Case Management within the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Regional Prevention and Response Plan.
				• A specific internal Board, Covid Tactical Group (CTG) has been established, chaired by the Director of Public Health, Protection and Community Services and which comprises representatives from all front line services and also the Emergency Planning, Resilience and Sustainability Adviser. The CTG group reports directly to the Council's Senior Leadership Team, through which it regularly reports to Cabinet.
				• The Director of Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services represents the Council on the South Wales Local Resilience Forum.
				• Regular updates are reported to the Welsh Government.
				• Council has put in place Service Recovery and Contingency Plans in the event of a resurgence of the virus.
				• Monitoring & reporting arrangements have been put in place to monitor delivery of the detailed actions outlined within the Cabinet report noted above.(or they will be)
				
				ACTIONS
				• Short Term – the Council will continue to work with partners to reduce the spread of the virus and reduce its impact on the Social, Economic, Environmental and Cultural Well-being of the County Borough. This will be monitored through the regular reports to Cabinet, relevant current and future partnership arrangements, the Council's Regulators as required and Welsh Government.
				• Long Term – the Council will work with partner organisations and will use the lessons learnt from the local, national and global approaches to the pandemic to strengthen its approach to:
				  - minimise the effect of infectious disease,
				  - reduce the risk of illness or death,
				  - be better able prepare for and respond to future incidents,
				  - put in place the resources required to mitigate and manage the risk.
					5	5	25	NEW RISK FOR 2020/21
								
								The post Christmas 2020 lockdown has had a significant impact on the number of Covid 19 cases, with the numbers falling to very low levels. The roll out of the vaccines has been a major contributory factor and this programme will continue for the rest of 2021 as the vast majority of the population in the UK receive their vaccines. Both UK and Welsh Governments have plans in place to lift all restrictions, other than those in respect of travelling to and from other countries in the summer. The Council has played a major role within Cwm Taf Morgannwg in supporting the WG and NHS in delivering the vaccination programme and continuing with a robust testing and track and trace approach to new cases.

Council's Priority 2020-24:	PEOPLE – ensure people are independent, healthy and successful			

Commitments	Actions that will support the delivery of the Priority	Responsible Service	Q4 Progress	Additional Information
Supporting our residents who are older, vulnerable or who have disabilities, to remain independent and have a good quality of life	Continue to assess and prioritise cases, in accordance with the flexibilities afforded by the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) 2014 Act, based on need and risk in a way that safeguards people and involves them and their families in decision making.	Adult Services	**Progressing as planned**	We have continued to work within the statutory duties of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014, although some temporary disruption has remained while we prioritise services and modify care and support offers, based on assessed need and risk. Assessments have continued to take a person-centred approach as far as practicable, although our focus has been on those with greatest need. Under on-going Alert Level 4 restrictions, there has been a need work over the phone and for a lot of people we have been able do everything we need to do in this way. This has restricted the number of visits to people but, where necessary, we have continued to undertake critical visits in agreement with the person and, where applicable, their carer. Single Point Access (SPA) and social work duty arrangements have continued to ensure people can speak to skilled staff about their care and support needs and, where relevant, appropriate action be taken. However, as the pandemic continues, we have experienced growing pressures as more people need care and support, and workloads across Adult Services remain high with caseloads increasingly more complex. There remains a waiting list of cases to be allocated across Care and Support and in the ACE (Occupational Therapy) Team. Additional external support has continued to be commissioned to address increased levels of assessment and review workloads across Care and Support.
	Continue to work with NHS Partners to ensure people are discharged safely and timely from hospital and supported in the community with appropriate health and social care support.		**Progressing as planned**	Hospital discharge demand has continued to be challenging, although this has stabilised since January 2021. The Council has continued to work in partnership with Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board (CTMUHB) and our commissioned providers to support individuals, with care and support needs, to discharge people safely and able them to return home from hospital as quickly as possible. However, on-going Covid-19 care home outbreaks has limited care home placements, resulting in some discharges taking longer to complete. From 1st January to 31st March 2021, Adult Services supported in total 665 discharges from hospitals, around 51 per week. The success of this response is testament to the strength of the established partnership with CTMUHB and our providers.
	Continue to work in partnership with Linc Cymru to deliver the extra care housing schemes at Pontypridd and Porth and enable more people to live independently in their own home		**Progressing as planned**	The Cwrt yr Orsaf development in Pontypridd continues to make progress towards completion in Summer 2021, despite the significant challenges faced by Contractors due to Covid-19. Funding to redevelop the former Danymynydd Care Home into extra care housing was agreed by the Council's Cabinet on 25th March 2021. Demolition of the former Care Home is planned for May 2021 and construction of the extra care housing scheme is due to commence in Autumn 2021, following planning approval during the Summer.

Commitments	Actions that will support the delivery of the Priority	Responsible Service	Q4 Progress	Additional Information
Supporting our residents who are older, vulnerable or who have disabilities, to remain independent and have a good quality of life	Continue to work in partnership with housing providers to deliver modern additional supported housing accommodation for vulnerable people, including Crown Avenue, Treorchy and Oxford Street, Mountain Ash	Adult Services	**Progressing as planned**	Crown Avenue (Treorchy) opened in January 2021. All flats have been allocated to people with a learning disability, with over 75% of the flats now occupied. Refurbishment of the Oxford Street (Mountain Ash) scheme continues to make good progress through the pandemic and was completed in spring 2021, with the building handed over on the 9th April 2021. Assessments of new tenants have commenced, and people will move in during the Summer.
	Continue to ensure that care homes and other care providers receive appropriate ongoing operational and financial support as the situation continues to evolve in line with Welsh Government guidance.		**Progressing as planned**	A range of measures remain in place to ensure, as much as possible, the on-going resilience of our commissioned care providers in ensuring safety, capacity and sustainability of provision. This includes continued support to adult social care providers to mitigate the Covid-19 impact through the distribution of the Covid Hardship Fund (where additional costs / income losses have been incurred as a result of pandemic). The Adults Purchasing and Commissioning Team also continues to work closely with colleagues in Environmental Health, Public Health Wales (PHW) and Health to support providers to manage the stringent requirements on infection control and PPE to keep the people they support safe. Feedback from our commissioned care providers continues to be positive and supportive, reinforcing our long-established relationships. The Council along with its regional Health and local authority partners has worked with the sector to support the roll out of the Covid-19 vaccination programme and asymptomatic lateral flow testing to frontline social care staff.
	Work with care homes to implement procedures with them to safely accommodate visits from friends and family in line with Welsh Government guidance.		**Progressing as planned**	Welsh Government announced that indoor care home visits could resume for one designated visitor from 13th March 2021. The decision on whether, and in what circumstances care home visits took place, rested with the individual care home provider, which included the Council in-house care homes. In each case, the care home put in place appropriate risk assessments, social distancing and safety measures to ensure resident safety. In care homes with Covid-19 cases and unable to re-open to visitors, visits for exceptional circumstances, including, but not restricted to, end of life, still continued as they have been throughout the pandemic. Throughout the pandemic, care home providers have strived to maintain contact between their residents and their families, while operating within the wider restrictions in place. This has included, where possible, virtual visits and calls through various forms of technology to ensure residents remained connected with family members.

Commitments	Actions that will support the delivery of the Priority	Responsible Service	Q4 Progress	Additional Information
Supporting our residents who are older, vulnerable or who have disabilities, to remain independent and have a good quality of life	Continue to review options for phased opening of day and respite services in line with demand and social distancing guidelines.	Adult Services	**Progressing as planned**	We have continued to offer a range of essential services during the Alert Level 4 restrictions, including: • Older People Day Centres - Whilst these centres have remained temporarily closed, we have developed a new temporary outreach service to support people, assessed as critical due to their own or carer's needs in their own homes and community. • Older People with Dementia Day Centres - The Council operated Cwmni Dda Day Centre (Trecynon) has remained open to provide a limited prioritised day service only for those people assessed as critical due to their own needs or crisis situations. However, the Health run Lewis Merthyr Day Unit (Treorchy) and Tonteg Day Unit (Pontypridd) have temporarily closed since December 2020, and where applicable, we have provided alternative care and support at home, based on need and risk. • Learning Disability Day Centres - Some centres and specialist provision for people with autism have remained open to provide prioritised day care and support only for those people assessed as critical due to their own needs or crisis situations, including: Llwynypia Learning Curve, Abercynon Learning Curve, Gadlys (Aberdare) Learning Curve, Danymynydd Autism Centre (Porth) and the Autism Life Centre (Trealaw). Treforest, Gilfach Goch and Wattstown Learning Curves and work-based projects have been closed throughout Covid-19. • Learning Disability (accommodation based) Respite - Services have continued, but only for people assessed and agreed as essential due to their own needs or crisis situations. All Council learning disability respite homes (excluding Clwyd Wen) and the facility commissioned from DRIVE in Brynsadler have remained open. As previously reported, we have ensured through the pandemic, where necessary, based on assessed need and risk, that there is alternative care and support at home for people affected by our reduced service offer. Plans are in place to reopen more service on a phased basis during May 2021 as Covid-19 lockdown restrictions ease.
	Work with regional partners to continue the phased reopening of regional equipment services to full capacity and restarting of windows manufacturing at Vision Products.		**Complete**	A range of essential services have continued to operate at Vision Products during the pandemic and will continue during current new Alert Level 4 restrictions, including: • Community Equipment Services, focusing on urgent deliveries and collections in Rhondda Cynon Taf and for other regional local authority partners and Health • Telecare installations and equipment servicing • Regional PPE service from 1st December 2020

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Commitments	Actions that will support the delivery of the Priority	Responsible Service	Q4 Progress	Additional Information
Supporting our residents who are older, vulnerable or who have disabilities, to remain independent and have a good quality of life	Work with partners to restart Stay Well@Home (Phase 2), Assistive Technology and Enhanced Primary Care regional transformation projects from July 2020.	Adult Services	**Complete**	As lockdown restrictions eased in the early part of summer 2020, the Regional Health and Social Care Transformation Projects restarted in July. Further information of the two Projects managed by Adult Services: - Assistive Technology (New Lifeline+ Service) – implementation of the Service began on 20th January 2020; however, full implementation has been delayed due to Covid-19. Whilst, the mobile responder element of the service has continued to operate flexibly throughout this period and provided a level of resilience and reassurance to residents, the proactive calling element has been delayed, but is now progressing. With changes for people in the shielding group changing from 16th August 2020, we have contacted them to offer on-going support through the New Lifeline+ Service, along with wider marketing of the service to all Rhondda Cynon Taf residents. - Stay well@ Home 2 - Implementation of the service in Rhondda Cynon Taf began on 20th January 2020 and continued during Covid-19, although demand for support changed and the service offered reduced operationally to reflect this. Rhondda Cynon Taf restarted full operation of the Service (7 days a week, including out of hours) from 6th July 2020 and this was extended to Merthyr Tydfil from 20th July 2021
	Continue support for NHS shielded patients and liaise with Test, Track & Trace colleagues to provide support to residents diagnosed with Covid-19 and required to shield for 2 weeks.	Community Services	**Complete**	The workforce details have now been secured with contracts extended until 30th September. Some staff have returned to their substantive roles and some moved into the vaccination programme. The staff in TTP will continue to respond to cases and contacts across the 3 LA's and undertake enhanced contact tracing whilst case numbers are manageable. There is flexibility across the LA to increase staff resource in TTP if the cases numbers increase.
	Transition towards the co-ordination of Community Resilience Centres including identifying community need and deploy a timely response to ensure households are supported to maintain adequate food provision, obtain medication, dog walking etc.		**Complete**	The team is now in place and continue to work across Merthyr and RCT. They work as part of the joint enforcement team (JET) with South Wales Police. The funding has been extended until March 2022 for the JET.
	Consider the future of CRC / Community Hub development post Covid-19.		**Complete**	Consideration has been given at all levels and with the Covid-19 situation remaining somewhat unstable. It has been agreed to continue to maintain the approach for a further 12 months to the end of March 2022.
	Restore 'At Home' library service from Rock Grounds		**Complete**	The @homelibrary service was suspended on the 23rd October 2020 after the introduction of an all Wales Firebreak. The service was reinstated on the 23rd November and has remained operational since. 17 new members have been added since the 23rd October 2020.

Commitments	Actions that will support the delivery of the Priority	Responsible Service	Q4 Progress	Additional Information
Encouraging residents to lead active and healthy lifestyles and maintain their mental wellbeing	Exploring ways that technology can support more people to exercise at home or minimise face to face contact.	Leisure Services	**Complete**	Classes are still available on line and via the LFL App. Traffic to these workouts has slowed due to the re-opening of centres
	Introduce some open air classes, utilising our parks, 3G pitches to allow customers to exercise in a safe manner outdoors.		**Complete**	Since the relaxing of measurers following the second lockdown a new programme of approx. 70 outdoor classes have been implemented from 26th April 2021. These will continue throughout the summer period and whilst tier 3 restrictions remain.
	Continue to develop and improve our digital communications and services to sports organisations and residents, especially the promotion of "essential exercise" for physical and mental health benefits.		**Some Progress**	Independent and small group outdoor activities are promoted on all social media platforms and through the Leisure For Life aAPP, along with key "benefits of regular activity" messages - for example, information to enable local walking, cycling and family activities. Support is also being provided to sports clubs and organisations to access the Sport Wales Be Active Fund. All messages are in line with WG restrictions e.g. exercising alone or with your household during Level 4 restrictions.
	Work with other Council services such as Education and YEPS to deliver safe, socially distanced exercise opportunities where services are being delivered e.g. summer HUB schools.		**Complete**	Currently working in partnership to plan the 2021 service delivery.
	Invest in programmes which enhance wellbeing through engagement with cultural activities and learning opportunities.	Community Services	**Complete**	An online programme of activities, courses and talks have been held by Garth Olwg / Adult Education Service. In addition Garth Olwg has worked on themed months including Wellbeing month (monthly cooking, guided meditation, hand massage), a literature festival (24 events in total for adults and children) and a food festival. An online programme of arts activity and performances has been curated and is available through the theatres' Facebook pages and RCT Theatres' YouTube page. The Arts & Creative Industries Team continue to deliver the Youth Arts and SONIG Youth Music Industry provision through online sessions for children and young people. Externally funded projects such as Forte continue to be delivered digitally too.

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Commitments	Actions that will support the delivery of the Priority	Responsible Service	Q4 Progress	Additional Information
Integrating health and social care and providing support for those with mental health problems and complex needs	Deliver an effective and efficient Contact, Track and Trace Service for Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council (RCTCBC) and the wider region, as part of the Regional Agreement for RCTCBC to host the service as part of the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Regional Response, to control the prevalence of Coronavirus in the community.	Public Protection	**Progressing as planned**	The workforce details have now been secured with contracts extended until 30th September 2021. Some staff have returned to their substantive roles and some moved into the vaccination programme. The staff in TTP will continue to respond to cases and contacts across the 3 LA's and undertake enhanced contact tracing whilst case numbers are manageable. There is flexibility across the LA to increase staff resource in TTP if the cases numbers increase.
	Ensure a sustainable Regional workforce model is developed and deployed to deliver Contact Track and Trace on behalf of the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Region Partners for the duration of the Pandemic.		**Progressing as planned**	The communicable disease enforcement officers continue to work across Merthyr and RCT. They work as part of the joint enforcement team (JET) with South Wales Police. The funding has been extended until March 2022 for the JET.
Integrating health and social care and providing support for those with mental health problems and complex needs	Ensure vulnerable children have access to Education and emergency childcare provision, including ensuring sufficient childcare provision is available for vulnerable children aged 0-4 throughout the summer holidays and for eligible Flying Start children when service resumes.	Education & Children's Services	**Complete**	Flying Start childcare has been fully operational since September 2020. Lateral flow tests have been successfully introduced across all settings for staff.
	Ensure robust safeguarding arrangements working with partners in the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board.	Children's Services	**Some Progress**	The work of the Board was reprioritised in light of the introduction of Tier 4, and the Bronze Meeting was reintroduced to ensure regular multi-agency communication and performance data monitoring. The Board has recently held its development day and priorities have been agreed that pull though work that could not be completed last year because of the Pandemic, and also take account of the multi-agency challenges facing the Board. Those priorities are: (1) Respond to the impact of the Covid pandemic. (2) Strengthen the links to other partnerships in the region. (3) Improve our approach to public protection concerns. (4) Cross-cutting priority: Communications and engagement

Commitments	Actions that will support the delivery of the Priority	Responsible Service	Q4 Progress	Additional Information
Improving services for children and young people and ensuring the needs of children are considered in everything we do	Develop a safe, sustainable service delivery model to provide Children's Services statutory responsibilities that will meet anticipated Welsh Government guidance. This means incrementally increasing the service that can safely be made available to the public with the goal of achieving a return to a full service in line with Welsh Government Guidance. This will commence with the review of child protection conferences and increasing the number of children who we see and whose voices we hear.	Children's Services	**Some Progress**	Children's Services continues to work to Welsh Government statutory guidance, subject to risk assessment and physical distancing requirements, adapting methods of service delivery as necessary. Given our statutory duties, we are incrementally returning to busines as usual, with the key difference being working from home and risk management of face to face work. Most staff have been vaccinated.

Priority is being given to safely visiting and hearing the voices of children most at risk this includes those on the child protection register, those looked after where there is potential placement breakdown or those where input is critical to maintain them at home. We continue to look after children in both residential and foster care, prioritising children and carers most in need of support.

We have commissioned UKICS to increase social work capacity in our Intensive Intervention Services (where there are social worker vacancies); this being identified as a key risk for the Council and service to manage. Child Protection Conferences and CLA reviews are now taking place virtually attended by partners and family members where possible. |
| | Improving availability of sustainable quality accommodation options for children and young people with complex needs through experiencing trauma. - Development of additional residential placement provision with a model of care which follows the trauma recovery model. Enabling RCT to meet its statutory requirements for placement sufficiency. | Children's Services | **Complete** | Carn Igli is registered with Care Inspectorate Wales and open. There have been some positive outcomes for the young people who have moved on to lower dependency provisions. However, the need for other similar provisions is well evidenced, and the need to develop more similar provision is included in future service plan. |
| | YEPS - Continue to offer virtual open access activities and plan for re-introduction of face-to-face provision and provide virtual information, advice and guidance to vulnerable young people utilising wicid tv and YouTube. | Community Well-being and Resilience - YEPS | **Complete** | Virtual youth work offer is now fully established as part of ongoing service delivery and face to face work in schools and street work has resumed. YEPS App is under development and due to be completed in April 2021. |

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Council's Priority 2020-24:	PLACES - Where people are proud to live, work and play			

Commitments	Actions that will support the delivery of the Priority	Responsible Service	Qtr 4 Progress	Qtr 4 Update to end March 2021
Keeping RCT clean through efficient street cleaning services, minimising the amount of waste we send to landfill, achieving our recycling targets through weekly recycling and regular refuse collections, and reducing our carbon footprint	**Street cleaning and recycling** **Continue waste and cleaning services with appropriate safe working arrangements in place, to include clean up after recent floods.**	Streetcare and Waste	**Progressing as planned**	Most services in Streetcare have continued during Quarter 4 with the exception of Enforcement who have partially returned to some enforcement duties whilst also providing some support to Covid related issues (marshalling of Covid Testing Centres, supporting Waste on recycling bag distribution, Facilities Cleaning for enhanced cleaning in schools as well as cleaning in community mass testing centres). Street Cleansing, fly tipping clearance etc., have operated normally with little exception, but with changes to operational practices to ensure the staff are as safe as possible e.g. working from home/starting from home, additional PPE, sanitising measures both for staff and vehicles, additional support vehicles to minimise number of staff in vehicles. Waste & Recycling collections have operated normally (with Covid measures such as use of support vehicles, etc in place).
	Monitor the implications/impact of demand for Community Recycling Centre Sites following reopening e.g. arising from arrangements to ensure social distancing.		**Progressing as planned**	The Council's 6 Community Recycling Centres (CRC's) have operated normally with Covid safety measures in place and have been extremely busy at times.
Keeping the County Borough moving, including improvements to roads and pavements and public transport, whilst also improving air quality	**Continue with 2020/21 Highways Improvement Programme including the design, planning and delivery of major infrastructure projects including the A4119 Dualling at Coed Ely, the Cynon Valley Gateway North Link and the Llanharan By-Pass and the repair of bridges.**	Highways	**Progressing as planned**	Works continues on highway investment programme within the borough via inhouse and external contractors.

Commitments	Actions that will support the delivery of the Priority	Responsible Service	Qtr 4 Progress	Qtr 4 Update to end March 2021
Keeping the County Borough moving, including improvements to roads and pavements and public transport, whilst also improving air quality	**• Major Economic Infrastructure Projects (our big road schemes) and Transportation Investment (Metro, etc.)** **• Highways Infrastructure – structures, highways, etc.** **• Flood Alleviation**	Highways	**Progressing as planned**	Our work on major projects continues including :- The submission of the Cynon Gateway North planning application in February; the A4119 duelling between Coed Ely and Ynysmeardy has been progressed that deal with the important aspects of the detailed design work and land negotiation.The deadline on compulsory purchase orders (CPO) and side road orders (SRO) has been reached and we are currently working to remove 8 objections to the CPO; Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for Llanharan Bypass is nearing completion for a pre-planning application consultation in Q1 of 21/22. Storm Dennis - number of repairs completed including Ynysyngharad Park footbridge repaired and opened in March 2021. Tylorstown Tip Phase 2/3 - major earthworks completed and river restored to normal course. Phase 4 currently being designed.
	Continue the rollout of Civil enforcement to ensure safe parking for our residents particularly as shops reopen after lockdown.		**Progressing as planned**	Civil parking enforcement continues throughout the borough.

Commitments	Actions that will support the delivery of the Priority	Responsible Service	Qtr 4 Progress	Qtr 4 Update to end March 2021
Keeping the County Borough moving, including improvements to roads and pavements and public transport, whilst also improving air quality	**Continue to deliver and manage the Council's contracted passenger transport requirements in the most effective, integrated and safe manner, with particular reference to school and community transport, within the constraints and the additional transport demands of the Covid - 19 pandemic.**	Transportation	**Progressing as planned**	The Council's Transportation Service has been working to existing delivery plan priorities, reacting to requests and delivering passenger transport. This work has been impacted by Covid-19 and focussed on agreeing and communicating timetable changes for local bus services in line with the travel restrictions associated firstly with the Welsh Government "stay home" and then the "stay local" messages, responding to associated enquiries, putting in place transport for vulnerable children when schools were closed except for online learning and managing school transport as schools opened up. Working closely with education, health and safety and public health colleagues, the service has managed the delivery safe and effective transport arrangements in accordance with Welsh Government and Public Health Wales Guidance. This has included: • identifying reduced capacities in line with social distancing, • keeping guidance for schools, parents/carers and young people up to date to support the safe transportation of learners to and from schools, • ensuring that operators, and their drivers and escorts, are provided with latest and most appropriate operational advice and particularly in relation to cleaning, sanitising and PPE, • providing timely information to remind parents and pupils to adhere to social distancing and the wearing of face coverings on their way to / from school, and • managing the school crossing patrol service, maintaining safe practices in line with social distancing.
	Continue to monitor air quality following WG guidelines in RCT hot spots, particularly the impact of travel restrictions imposed during lockdown (Covid-19).	PHP	**Progressing as planned**	Air Quality Monitoring has continued during this period and the provisional data indicates there has been a decrease in Nitrogen Dioxide levels, with certain urban areas experiencing greater reductions than elsewhere. As oulined in the previous update the impact of Covid related travel disruption on local air quality has been complex and it may take some time before the immediate/longer term consequences are fully understood. The air quality monitoring data will be reviewed in the coming months in preparation for submission of the annual Air Quality Progress Report to Welsh Government by the 30th September 2021.

Commitments	Actions that will support the delivery of the Priority	Responsible Service	Qtr 4 Progress	Qtr 4 Update to end March 2021
Ensuring the County Borough is one of the safest places in Wales, with high levels of community cohesion and where residents feel safe	<u>**Substance Misuse**</u> **Resume face to face Substance Misuse Client Support meetings.**	PHP	**Complete**	Services are being delivered remotely where possible. The newly developed Specialist Substance Misuse and Mental Health Team has gone live and provides crisis intervention support to residents across Cwm Taf Morgannwg including those residents placed in a form temporary accommodation e.g. Bed and Breakfast accommodation and hostel provision.
	<u>**Domestic Abuse**</u> **Resume face to face IDVA client meetings and drop in support at the Oasis Centre.**		**Complete**	Face to face meetings with clients have taken place where it safe to do so. Recovery Plan being developed to support staff to be able to return to the Oasis Centre and eventually consider how best to see clients at the Centre.
	Increase proactive community cohesion and engagement work.		**Some Progress**	It has been difficult to progress some aspects of Comunuty and Cohesion Work during the pandemic. We are continuing to explore and progress Virtual opportunties with our key partners.
	Continue to work in partnership to ensure the residents of RCT are safe, to include updates on ASB, Rogue traders, scams, etc.	PHP	**Progressing as planned**	Partnership working with the National Trading Standards Team and North Yorkshire Trading Standards continues to contribute to the take down of Scam media accounts and websites. During the pandemic we have increased our scam warning messages via the RCT Media Team and the Trading Standards social media platforms due to the increased volume of intelligence on Voice Automated HMRC, DVLA, Royal Mail and COVID test scams. We continue to work in partnership with the National Anti Fraud Network (NAFN) and have seen an increase in Council Tax scams during the quarter. The Camarthenshire Trading Standards Pilot scheme for truecall data continues and has been very successful. We are now able to target our resources more effectivley by concentrating on the worst hit Truecall vulnerable clients through the identification of patterns and scams and thereby blocking the scam callers permanently. Doorstep Crime continues to be a high priority for the service and we have seen a seasonal increase in complaints for building, roofing and gardening work this quarter. Doorstep Crime prevention messages have increased during the quarter via the RCT Media Team and the Trading Standards Social Media platforms. Our cases in RCT are representaive of Doorstep Crime across the region and we are working alongside South Wales Police via Operation Signature and the Banking Protocol. This work ensures that our residents are protected and educated to make informed decisions and report any incidents.

Commitments	Actions that will support the delivery of the Priority	Responsible Service	Qtr 4 Progress	Qtr 4 Update to end March 2021
Getting the best out of our parks by looking after and investing in our greenspaces	**Increase biodiversity across RCT e.g. by reviewing grass cutting schedules, introducing wildflower grass management.**	Not in a plan	**Progressing as planned**	Plans in place for resumption of grass cutting in 2021/22 cutting season. An additional 10ha of grass was added to last year's 120ha. The grass cutting season is due to resume on 12th April with the biodiversity areas due to be cut towards the end of August, beginning of September. Sign posts and discs were installed on grass verges which have been identified for wildflower management. Training of grass cutting teams is due to take place in early April to ensure these areas remain uncut until the appropriate time. Meeting with Parks department also scheduled to take place in early April 21 to ensure all biodiversity areas remain uncut until later on in the season. Tree planting exercise took place in November and December with 300 trees in various parks and open spaces. This was completed in March 2021. Working on the launch on the new biodiversity website.
	Managing the impact of flood damage in our Parks and open spaces this includes ensuring the Lido Pontypridd is reopened as planned in 2021, and the rebuild/repair work in Ynysangharad Park is completed.	Leisure	**Complete**	All the work was completed by the end of March 2021.
	Continue to invest in playgrounds, sports pitches and parks buildings, encouraging use of green spaces for physical activity.		**Some Progress**	Contractors have continued to make good progress in the final quarter and all remaining schemes have been rescheduled and programmed for completion in 2021-22.
Getting the best out of our parks by looking after and investing in our greenspaces	**Recommence the Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group to agree and progress actions that will contribute to the Council's response to Net Zero.**	Various	**Progressing as planned**	The latest Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group took place on 17 March 2021 and a verbal update was provided to Cabinet on 25 March. Of particular note is that the Group agreed the Council's draft Climate Change strategy and that it should form part of the Council's wide ranging Climate Conversation 'Lets Talk Climate Change RCT'. This approach was endorsed by the Council's Cabinet at its meeting on 25 March. The Climate Conversation was launched on 9 April and will continue to the end of May 2021. There will be further and more in-depth engagement with residents and communities when it is safe to do so. In the meantime services across the Council are continuing their work to help to tackle Climate Change.

Recovery Quarterly Monitoring Report 2020/21

Council's Priority 2020-24:	PROSPERITY – create the opportunity for people and businesses to be innovative, entrepreneurial and fulfil their potential and prosper			

Commitments	Actions that will support the delivery of the Priority	Responsible Service	Progress	Additional Information
Investing in our town centres, bringing jobs and homes into our town centres to create vibrant, thriving places people wish to live, work and socialise	Facilitate safe social distancing arrangements in the towns and green spaces. Also work with the business community to help them meet new challenges and opportunities, including development of a recovery grant.	Regeneration	**Progressing as planned**	Arrangements for a new Covid-19 recovery grant to support town centre businesses with external improvements to help trading arrangements was agreed by Cabinet in September. This scheme has now been launched and detailed communication with eligible town centre businesses is underway. This includes a WG TRI supported scheme for businesses in our 8 key town centres and a Valleys Taskforce supported scheme in 22 smaller centres to ensure as wide a coverage as possible. This will include making sure that businesses have access to the developing package of Covid related support available. Work is also continuing with Aberdare, Treorchy and Pontypridd BIDS to ensure they are well placed to support their business members. More than eighty businesses were awarded grants worth £435,000 by the end of March when the schemes closed for applications. The projects will now be delivered by the end of June 2021. New key town centre redevelopment schemes such as at Guto Square in Mountain Ash will significantly help with better pedestrian access and social distancing and will be better placed to host street markets and events. Guto Square is now ready to be delivered with land assembly in place with a CPO for a parcel of derelict land and adjacent property purchase now completed. Tender processes for demolition and construction contractors has been completed and works started on the demolition contract in March 2021.
	Develop and deliver a package of support for businesses in recovery, including through encouraging local marketing, purchasing and supply chain development.		**Progressing as planned**	The grant offer for businesses has been reviewed and refocussed in light of the current economic conditions created by Covid-19 and earlier flood events. These include the new Covid business grant mentioned above, a new Flood Resilience Grant for town centre businesses, a new Major Projects Investment Fund along with a refocussed Enterprise Investment Fund and Town Centre Maintenance Grant. This comprehensive package of support will help business to survive, adapt and diversify in response to the current economic circumstances. Since September the refocussed Enterprise Investment Fund has supported 50 businesses with grant awards totalling £275,000. 7 businesses in Pontypridd Town Centre have benefitted from Flood Resilience Grants to improve their properties. Several significant projects are at advanced stages of development with awards expected imminently in the next quarter. In addition to this, the Means have produced draft recommendations for consideration for town centre business sustainability and resilience. Furthermore, plans are also being developed in partnership with Welsh Government's South East Wales Regional Team to deliver a package of focussed support for manufacturing businesses in RCT which will be progresses in the new financial year.

Commitments	Actions that will support the delivery of the Priority	Responsible Service	Progress	Additional Information
Investing in our town centres, bringing jobs and homes into our town centres to create vibrant, thriving places people wish to live, work and socialise	Deliver a programme of key property developments in town centres leading to a more sustainable future such as those at Dunraven Street Tonypandy, Hannah Street Porth, Mountain Ash Town Hall and the Black Lion in Aberdare.	Regeneration	**Progressing as planned**	The pipeline of key town centre property developments and improvements continues to make good progress with approvals made and site starts being made in this quarter. Key schemes such as the redevelopment of Mountain Ash Town Hall and Llwynypia Courthouse have now started their physical delivery onsite with good initial progress being made. Several key commercial property redevelopments have also commenced which will repurpose empty properties for new uses such as Abigail Lewis Photography in Mountain Ash and Zuccos Juice Bar in Pontypridd. A grant award has been made to Rhondda Housing for the purchase and demolition of the badly fire damaged properties in Dunraven Street Tonypandy which will see the delivery of a new housing development. The Black Lion redevelopment is continuing on site with practical completion due early in the next quarter. Other private sector developer led schemes in Hannah Street Porth and Oxford and Commercial Streets Mountain Ash are at advanced development stage, with grant awards and start of works expected early in the next quarter.
Delivering major regeneration and transportation schemes, maximising the impact of the new South Wales Metro, to create better places to live and work, whilst protecting and enhancing the County Borough	Plan and deliver a post Covid-19 Tourism Strategy, and refocus on major projects such as Zip World Tower, accommodation strategy.	Tourism & Events	**Progressing as planned**	An initial membership list has been produced for what will now be a Visit RCT Strategic Steering Group (as opposed to Strategic Board) featuring key personnel representing attractions, accommodation and travel to drive forward the RCT Tourism Strategy. The first meeting is planned in for Q1 in 2021/22. Arad Research Consulting were contracted to undertake RCT's Bedstock Survey, and by the end of Q4 approximately ¾ of the providers operating within RCT had been surveyed. An extension by Visit Wales to fall in-line with the accommodation sector beginning to reopen (due to Covid-19) and therefore more improved communication has meant that the final report will be submitted in Q1 2021/22.

Commitments	Actions that will support the delivery of the Priority	Responsible Service	Progress	Additional Information
Delivering major regeneration and transportation schemes, maximising the impact of the new South Wales Metro, to create better places to live and work, whilst protecting and enhancing the County Borough	Plan and deliver a post Covid-19 Tourism Strategy, and refocus on major projects such as Zip World Tower, accommodation strategy.	Tourism & Events	**Progressing as planned**	Visit Britain's flagship global travel trade event Explore took place virtually, bringing together more than 350 global buyers to connect with 350 tourism industry suppliers and destinations from across the UK. In total 36 appointments took place with tour operators from a variety of markets including Japan, Germany, USA, Canada, UK and Ireland. Follow-up communications are planned later in the year. Valleys Regional Park (VRP) development work continues, with work at Dare Valley Country Park continuing (i.e. bike track development ongoing, signage scheme, horse trails, etc). Work has begun at Ynysangharad War Memorial Park (YWMP) where improvements to the pathways and lighting throughout the park is well underway. YWMP has received approximately £300k additional funding from VRP for work on this project with spend to be planned in. Ongoing discussions and working relationships continue with Zip World around potential opening dates when Welsh Government Guidelines allow, joint marketing, brown/white visitor signage, and a Corporate Open Day. Other key projects include the Abernant and Rhondda Tunnel Projects plus the Brecon Beacons Waterfall Project, and an initial meeting with Natural Resource Wales on development of a masterplan for the North of RCT. The Tourism team continue to touch base with visitor businesses including accommodation providers and attractions for updates with regards to reopening (when and how) as Covid-19 restrictions become more relaxed. This has prompted a Phase 1 paid for social media marketing campaign targeting all of Wales and promoting the outdoors and self-contained accommodation, reaching 97,780 people, of which 3,050 clicked through for further info. Further marketing is ongoing with the Visit RCT television advert still being developed. Discussions and demos relating to the potential for a new tourism website and booking solution continue with best practice suppliers identified. Cost, timescales and integration could impact take-up and a proposal is being prepared.
	Develop revised delivery plan for the Local Development Plan review.	Planning	**Progressing as planned**	The formal Call for Candidate Sites finished on the 31st of March, concluding with over 200 sites being put forward and registered for a range of development types. These included residential, employment, retail, renewable energy, green infrastructure, mineral quarries as well as proposed mixed use development schemes incorporating several of the above, with sites across all of RCT. Sites were submitted by private landowners and small and major developers alike, with RCT owned sites also being put forward. Continued preparation of other elements of the Revision has also taken place, with the drafting of an Urban Capacity Study, the Settlement Strategy and Hierarchy research and analysis report; and the preparation of Visioning events. There has also been the ongoing development of the Integrated Sustainability Appraisal process with the associated Scoping Report subject to consultation and an engagement event.

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Commitments	Actions that will support the delivery of the Priority	Responsible Service	Progress	Additional Information
Delivering major regeneration and transportation schemes, maximising the impact of the new South Wales Metro, to create better places to live and work, whilst protecting and enhancing the County Borough	Deliver the Llys Cadwyn/Taff Vale redevelopment project, including the footbridge to Ynysangharad Park to generate new jobs, increase visitor numbers and spend in the local economy.	Regeneration	**Progressing as planned**	The construction contract for the Llys Cadwyn has progressed well and has now been completed to a very high standard to create a new landmark set of buildings that will act as a catalyst for further development in Pontypridd. The new footbridge between Llys Cadwyn has now opened to the public with some works to be completed such as the installation of the gates. The flagship tenant for the largest office building at Llys Cadwyn, Transport for Wales, have now begun their occupation and tenancy from November. The marketing process for the remainder of the available space is progressing well with two of the ground floor commercial units being let - one to the locally based Bradleys Coffee which has now opened and the other to the high quality - Loungers brand.
	Deliver a modern 30,000 square foot business unit at Coedely Business Park to generate new investment and employment.		**Progressing as planned**	The Construction contract completed in February 2021 with snagging work with the contractor continuing. The completed building is of a high quality Grade A business unit specification that will stand out in the South East Wales business property market and act as a catalyst for further development of the Coedely Colliery site. The development is now being actively marketed to prospective business tenants and there is an active pipeline of interest and enquiries which are being progressed.
	Deliver a new integrated Transport Hub in Porth for seamless bus and rail travel to take advantage of the new Metro services as part of the Porth Regeneration Strategy		**Progressing as planned**	Good progress is being made on the development of this initiative. Detailed design development is continuing to RIBA Stage 4 with the planning permission now being granted. Detailed development discussions are continuing with Transport for Wales in order to achieve the best outcome in terms of an integrated transport facility. The construction tender process is underway and will be completed during the next quarter.
	Redevelop the derelict former goods yard site at Robertstown Aberdare with up to 20 state of the art small business units to generate sustainable local investment and jobs.		**Progressing as planned**	The construction programme for the 20 modern business units at Robertstown is now well underway with completion programmed for late 2021. Preliminary works are complete and good progress is being made on the main construction phase with groundworks largely completed and erection of steelwork for the units well underway.
	Develop Dare Valley Country Park as a Valleys Regional Park Discovery Gateway providing new family friendly bike trails, new adventure play area, bike hire station, hotel refurbishment and shower block extension.		**Progressing as planned**	Good progress on the works is continuing onsite with practical completion due on all elements within the next quarter with the different onsite contractors working to the current Covid-19 construction regulations. The current works elements include bike trails, cycle pump tracks, shower block extension, hotel refurbishment and cycle storage and hire facility. All of theses are now very close to completion with the hotel improvements completing post contract snagging and will shortly be ready for occupation The construction of the new play adventure play area has been completed and is open to the public.

Commitments	Actions that will support the delivery of the Priority	Responsible Service	Progress	Additional Information
Delivering major regeneration and transportation schemes, maximising the impact of the new South Wales Metro, to create better places to live and work, whilst protecting and enhancing the County Borough	Further develop Ynysangharad Park alongside flood recovery work as a VRP Discovery Gateway including improved visitor facilities and restoration of key features such as the bandstand.	Regeneration	**Progressing as planned**	Construction of the Changing Places facility in the Lido Visitor Centre has been completed to a high standard and will be a valuable additional facility for the Lido's reopening in the next quarter. Detailed design on footpath and lighting improvements is complete and the subsequent tender process has also been completed with contract awarded and works starting onsite in January 2021. Good progress has been made with significant elements of the comprehensive delivery programme complete by the end of the quarter with project completion due by the end of the first quarter of the next financial year. The significant National Heritage Lottery Fund grant approval worth almost £2 million was awarded in December which will allow a further significant phase of improvements in the Park to commence in the Summer of 2021.
	Repurpose and redevelop the YMCA building in Pontypridd as a hub for social enterprise and community arts activity.		**Progressing as planned**	Construction contract continues onsite, complying with Covid-19 construction regulations on this constrained town centre site. Demolition elements onsite now complete. Significant progress is now being made on the main construction phase with the steelwork frame erection now completed and work on securing the floors and roof underway. This work is almost complete with the building being weatherproof and really beginning to take shape as the landmark building for the town that it will become.
	Redevelop the Bingo Hall site in Pontypridd including demolition to provide a key development site for investment such as a hotel at the gateway to the town.		**Progressing as planned**	Detailed site investigation and testing is now completed. Initial demolition contract for substantial asbestos strip and removal has now been completed. This phase has been more significant than originally planned with far more extensive asbestos on site needing treatment and removal. The procurement and tender exercise for the main building demolition contract has been completed with contract awarded and start of main demolition has now commenced on site which will require a complex and careful approach in the constrained town centre site.
	Redevelop Oxford Buildings, Mountain Ash (a significant disused retail block) for new residential use with an emphasis on supported living.	Housing Strategy	**Complete**	The Oxford Buildings Scheme in Mountain Ash is now complete. This was a joint initiative between Cynon Taf Community Housing Group, RCT and the Welsh Government to bring a much needed supported housing facility to the area. The Council's Housing Strategy Team have worked closely with Cynon Taf Community Housing from the initial stages of the development; consulting with community members over the plans and designs, to the delivery of the completed scheme. The development provides up to 8 self-contained, high quality apartments specifically for adults with a learning disability. Individuals will have access to targeted support from care partners DRIVE to enable them to maximise their independence and promote choice. The development creates a safe and secure environment where residents can integrate with the wider community, whilst also providing a more welcoming entrance to the town centre.
	Continue to deliver other Capital projects across the Council estate, providing recovery opportunities for local contractors and businesses.	Regeneration/ Corporate Estates	**Progressing as planned**	

Commitments	Actions that will support the delivery of the Priority	Responsible Service	Progress	Additional Information
Delivering major regeneration and transportation schemes, maximising the impact of the new South Wales Metro, to create better places to live and work, whilst protecting and enhancing the County Borough	Seek funding to develop a cultural hub in Treorchy, building on the existing theatre and library.	Community Services	**Complete**	The funding application to Welsh Government's Museums, Archives and Libraries division (MALD) was successful and development of the cultural hub has begun, with external work underway. There will be internal redesign of the library building to include new shelving, furniture and an improved children's area, providing a high quality public space for the community.
Increase the number of quality homes available and affordable to provide greater housing choice for residents	Continue to process Emergency Flood Recovery Grants for those individuals that are in temporary accommodation or at risk of becoming homeless.	Housing Strategy	**Progressing as planned**	No new referrals since the last quarter. 3 referrals are ongoing due to applicants not wanting contractors in their home initially as they were shielding due to covid-19. 2 applicants are now happy for work to progress and contractors will be starting work shortly, the other remaining applicant is currently abroad and has been since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, they are unsure when they will be returning to their property in order to progress with the grant. To date, 23 grants have been approved with £64,000 grant awarded.
	Deliver the integrated Homelessness Recovery Plan and respond to current and emerging housing need in response to Covid-19 including homelessness, temporary accommodation and landlord support.	PHP/Housing Strategy	**Progressing as planned**	The Capital Modern Methods of Construction development is progressing well, funding has been utilised as required to the end of March 2021, the scheme is due to be complete by September 2021. The Social Housing Lettings Agency Scheme continues to progress well, with positive engagement with landlords. The scheme has 10 properties that are in the process of being signed up, however due to delays with signing lease agreements it hasn't been possible to get the 10 properties signed up by the 31st March 2021.
	Develop a Registered Social Landlord Covid-19 recovery plan and complete the social housing grant for 2020/21, to continue to support the development of affordable houses that meet local needs.	Housing Strategy	**Progressing as planned**	Continue ongoing support to Registered Social Landlords through monthly meetings with CEO's and more regular meetings with operational staff. 17 Housing Schemes are under development as part of the Social Housing grant programme, totalling an investment of just under £18 million. RCT received a Social Housing Grant (SHG) allocation of £8.2million for 2020/21, which was fully allocated. During this year 164 affordable housing units were delivered using SHG. The RCT 2021/22 SHG allocation is £15.3million, which is nearly double the allocation in the previous financial year. RCT welcome this increase in funding and are confident in allocating all of the budget by the end of the financial year.

Commitments	Actions that will support the delivery of the Priority	Responsible Service	Progress	Additional Information
Ensuring we have good schools so all children have access to a great education	Ensure effective learning opportunities by supporting early years settings and schools to deliver blended onsite and distance learning, including overcoming the barriers to digital exclusion. Support the safe and successful transition of learners back to full time schooling in line with WG policy.	Education	**Progressing as planned**	The LA guidance for all Early Years childcare settings and schools on how to operate safely during the second lockdown period were regularly revised and updated in line with updated guidance provided by Welsh Government. This ensured that all settings and schools were fully informed as to LA expectations on the necessary steps required to be fully Covid-19 compliant. Similarly, guidance documents on distance, digital and blended learning from LA officers and the regional school improvement service have continued to be developed, reviewed and disseminated to schools. This has ensured that during the lockdown period schools provided opportunities for effective teaching and learning. In addition, schools have continued to be offered support on the blended learning guidance and practices in the form of bespoke packages and to meet schools' individually identified needs. During the spring term 2021 when all schools were, in the main, working remotely the collation of good practice case studies was undertaken by the Central South Consortium. CSC identified schools in RCT where distance learning was effective and these were shared with all schools across the LA in order to help support and develop effective practices across all our schools.

LA School Improvement officers and CSC Principle Improvement Partners have continued to meet regularly to discuss Covid operational practices and all aspects of school improvement and how this information would then be shared with all schools. This has been achieved through regular attendance at online secondary headteachers meetings and primary cluster convenor meetings which have been invaluable forums for sharing information, addressing areas of concern and seeking collective solutions to problems raised.
Additionally, the phased return of Foundation phase pupils, February 22nd, all primary pupils from March 15th and the subsequent return of all pupils to face to face learning from the 12th April has been well organised by the LA in partnership with schools. There have been no significant operational issues in any schools with the phased re-start, with schools reporting that they are very happy to see their pupils back, and as an LA it has been very pleasing to see how effectively and efficiently the schools resumed their normal practices and procedures.

The School Improvement team will continue to provide a blended approach to meetings and visits next year and respond to the needs of individual schools, although face to face visits will become more common as the year progresses as such visits allow a more in-depth knowledge and understanding of specific areas of school improvement e.g. listening to learners, learning walks and observation of teaching and learning. |

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Commitments	Actions that will support the delivery of the Priority	Responsible Service	Progress	Additional Information
Ensuring we have good schools so all children have access to a great education	Support the wellbeing and additional learning needs of all pupils across all year groups	Education	**Progressing as planned**	The Wellbeing Action Plan 2020/21 has been evaluated and all actions have been completed. Good progress has been made against the actions in the ALN Transformation Action Plan. Effective use of grant funding will continue to support overarching strategic action plans for Wellbeing and ALN Transformation, such as training in nurture approaches from Nurture UK and further development of PERMA. Due to the pandemic Welsh Government have extended the period of grant spend to 31st August 2021 for several grants, therefore full evaluation of impact of the funding will not take place until September 2021. The Step 3/4 Monitoring and Governance Group and Operational Group continue to monitor and support the Key Stage 3/4 SEBD Step 3/4 provisions. Due to Covid-19 the implementation of some new provisions has been delayed. However progress reports from established Step 3/4 provisions indicate positive progress on identified impact measures. Nearly all ALNCos continue to show positive engagement in the ALN Transformation Professional Learning Programme. Sessions have been well attended with positive feedback. A formal evaluation will be undertaken at the end of the academic year. Statutory duties continue to be maintained. During the period of restricted attendance at schools setting between Jan - Mar 2021 service delivery models were adapted to support schools, pupils and families through blended learning approaches. The EPS helpline established during the first lockdown has continued to provide wellbeing support to professionals, pupils and their families. Workshops have been held for professionals to provide advice and guidance on blended learning approaches for statemented pupils. Attendance at virtual training courses continues to be positive and a blended approach to training will be provided during the next academic year. ALNCos have been asked to complete relevant audits that will inform the next delivery plan. Support for families continued to be a priority with virtual coffee mornings/evenings being held in partnership with SNAP Cymru. The Family Engagement Action plan 2020/21 has been evaluated and a new 2021/22 plan devised. Following the appointment of the new statutory Early Years ALN LO, good progress has been made in mapping current early years provision and identifying areas for development.
	Continue to deliver the 21st Century schools investment programme	Education	**Progressing as planned**	All Band A projects have now been successfully completed, with outstanding ongoing building defects being remedied. Significant progress is being made with the Council's second wave of school investment with Band B projects progressing. The first phase of works at Ffynnon Taf primary school have been completed, with the second phase out to tender and site work planned over the summer. Planning permission has been granted for YGG Aberdar, with work on site due to start in early 2021. Projects in the greater Pontypridd area are now underway, with three projects out to tender and two in the design phase.

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Commitments	Actions that will support the delivery of the Priority	Responsible Service	Progress	Additional Information
Helping people into work and better paid employment	Reinstate new referrals for employment support and develop digital/remote provision.	Employment support	**Complete**	Return to face to face delivery has not been reinstated this quarter due to Covid-19 restrictions remaining in place. However, referrals into the employment support programmes has increased and are nearly back to pre-Covid-19 levels. CfW+ has exceeded the revised annual targets, which including those set for additional funding totalled 796 Engagements and 369 Job Entries (Revised joint annual targets - 700 Engagements and 300 Job Entries). The CfW programme referral numbers have also increased with life time targets for engaging with both Adults and Young People already exceeded. Eligible referrals from the Pontypridd and Rhondda Fawr clusters are still a challenge and will be a priority next year. Online delivery of training programmes has been developed and delivered with great success in Qtr 4. An evaluation of our 'Look to Learn' programme was undertaken in Qtr 4 and reported that of those attending the mix of 26 accredited courses on offer, 72 participants gained 129 qualifications and 54 people attended the 45 sessions of non accredited training on offer. In Qtr 4 the employment routes programme has engaged with 86 participants with 56 going into employment. The Chromebook loan scheme has been promoted to programme clients with 30 being loaned out to date to carry out job search and training activities and to attend interviews online with employers.
	Deliver the Council's apprenticeship and graduate schemes and increase the number of opportunities available across the Council.	Employment, Education & training Team (HR)	**Complete**	All apprentices and graduates from the 20/21 intake are now in post. 26 graduates were recruited across areas including project management, IT, Engineering and Energy management and 33 apprentices including in civil engineering, youth work, finance and building surveying. Plans are currently underway for the September 2021 intake, including posts in highways and fleet which were delayed due to the impacts of Covid-19 and social distancing limiting the number of apprentices who could be supervised concurrently.

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**Update of actions arising from the recommendations contained in the review of the
Council's response to Storm Dennis Cabinet Report 18 December 2020**
(this update aligns to the Q4 reporting period)

No	Agreed Actions	Qtr 4 Year End Update
1.	**Strengthen plans to respond to extreme weather events**	The first formal meeting of the RCT Strategic Flood Risk Management Board took place on 9 February 2021. The Board agreed to consider joint approaches to addressing current issues and longer-term schemes, including how best to respond to the challenges of Climate Change. This approach will also enable the Council to maximise funding opportunities. Work identified by the Board is progressing e.g. sharing the Emergency Control with partners; completing studies of the lower Taff modelling and the river Cynon; joint approaches to short and longer term projects; the need for better and more accurate shared data and the potential for collaboration in specific local projects inc. Castle Inn Bridge, Sion Street. The second meeting of the Strategic Flood Risk Management Board was held on 25 May, for which an update will be provided in the Quarter 1 report. A further meeting is scheduled for early September. The wider Flood Action Plan was considered by the Finance & Performance Scrutiny Committee as part of the quarterly performance arrangements on 13 April.
2.	**Undertake a further comprehensive review of the County Borough to identify the high risk residential and industrial areas likely to be at most risk of flooding in the future as climate change takes effect and identify the possible longer term alleviation and mitigation measures that could be put in place.**	We continue to make good progress in our comprehensive review of high risk residential and industrial areas likely to be at most risk of future flooding that will inform the Council's revised Flood Risk Management Plan. We are also responding to the early findings of the review which indicated a need for wider awareness raising and involvement with residents and businesses to support them to better manage their risk. See Item 4 below. Welsh Government is currently considering the possibility of aligning the Flood Risk Management Plan, required later this year, with the review of the Local Flood Risk Strategy is required by October 2022. This integrated approach will allow for ALL areas of flood risk will be considered within a single updated strategy. In the meantime, we are continuing to develop longer term flood alleviation and mitigation measures as set out below.

No	Agreed Actions	Qtr 4 Year End Update
3.	**Create a Flood Support Team alongside the Housing Grants Service, that supports landowners, residents, and businesses in high risk flood areas to procure local flood prevention measures, provides advice and guidance**.	Information obtained from public engagement suggests that there is a need to promote flooding awareness, provide information and guidance on many aspects of flooding and flood risk management. Meeting this need will require additional resource which will also to assist in the introduction of key actions and measures that will be informed by the Council's review of its Local Flood Risk Strategy and Flood Risk Management Plan. There is also a need for a central point of contact to coordinate Council Services and liaise with communities. A new post will be created to work alongside the Flood Risk Professionals in the Flood Risk Management Team to fully understand the risks, and to communicate and coordinate support required to residents.
4.	**Request that individual landowners and property owners, particularly in high flood risk areas, consider and evidence how best they can protect their land, homes, and businesses through local measures.**	We continue to strengthen the advice and availability of information provided to land and property owners in respect of the local measures that they can use to better protect their land, homes, and businesses This has included: • Providing information on our website including key contact numbers, advice on being prepared, where to look for additional information e.g. Natural Resources Wales, advice on being safe, and what to do if you have been flooded. • Using our website, examples in March and February 2021, and social media, examples in May, to communicate directly with residents and businesses etc. • Analysing the feedback from our Flood Risk Management public engagement exercise to inform future information requirements. • Progressing the resourcing of a Flood Support Team that will support residents, businesses, and landowners to comply with insurance conditions and also enforce if necessary. • Completed the first phase of the interim Flood resistance project using Welsh Government funding. This project provides the opportunity for residents/owners to receive floodgates, vents (on loan) and 'floodsax' to enable them to better protect their properties against flooding. 407 residential properties at risk of flooding were invited to participate with 281 returning the agreement and participating in the project. This has resulted in 401 Flood gates being distributed and 149 vent covers. Also, each property had a minimum of 5 floodsax for use in an emergency.

No	Agreed Actions	Qtr 4 Year End Update
		• Considering service changes that will involve potential alterations to both the Flood risk management team and associated legal services. This change will reinforce the need for regulatory control over flood risk management assets and ensure that landowners are clear about their responsibilities and are compliant with relevant legislation. Consideration is also being given for enacting Land drainage byelaws. It is envisaged that a paper will be submitted to Cabinet in 2021/22 detailing the proposed service changes and additional regulatory framework.
5.	**Further update the Emergency Plan to ensure that in the event of a major incident we provide local community responses centres within the communities most affected.**	We are continuing to identify premises suitable and available for use as local community response centres. Whilst our aim is to give consideration to the establishment of one such centre per ward, the geography and size/facilities within the existing potential centres may not meet all the identified criteria. Where this is the case, we may need to identify other complementary premises or provide premises that are accessible and can service a number of surrounding wards which will also provide cover for those wards which have no suitable premises. It is anticipated that a complete list of potential sites together with potential gaps in coverage will be available for initial consideration in quarter 2, following which we will be in a position to start formal processes to ensure the availability of the premises and to establish appropriate sites for additional storage for example. Once formal processes are complete the premises can be included in the Council's Emergency Plan.

No	Agreed Actions	Qtr 4 Year End Update
6.	**Maximise the benefits of our current infrastructure by undertaking comprehensive maintenance and introducing some enhancement so this infrastructure operates at the optimum level in its response to extreme weather events.**	We continue to enhance our infrastructure maintenance arrangements in response to extreme weather events. These include: • Ensuring scour[1] risk assessments are considered as part of the project planning of the bridge maintenance programme. • Development of a prioritised programme of specialist inspections of key highways river walls and structures. • Considering how long- term vegetation management can be incorporated into the highway's structural asset maintenance strategy. • Undertaking a programme of prioritised culvert inspections (900mm+). • Ongoing discussions with NRW to identify river walls that serve as flood defences. The outcome of these discussions will inform risk assessment requirements. A programme to strengthen and improve key river walls will then be developed, subject to funding. • Preparation of a draft maintenance contract to undertake culvert repairs that will ensure that scour defects are repaired in a timely manner. This is currently under review and will be progressed via procurement processes. • Planning general inspections of highway assets adjacent to rivers when there is low river flow or arranging specialist inspections to identify the presence of scour. Commencing May-August 2021.
7.	**Digitalise and remotely monitor key flood defences, which will include key culverts, outlets, and other drainage systems via a central control room.**	The Emergency Control Centre opened in January 2021 and was successfully trialled in February and March 2021 at times when we received weather warnings of heavy rain from the Met Office. The Control Centre staff utilised electronic monitoring equipment to observe river levels and send key messages to Councillors and service teams where necessary to provide relevant, targeted information. This approach was vital in the areas severely affected by flooding in February 2020 to monitor the effectiveness of flood defences The Emergency Control Centre will continue to be used to support senior managers to coordinate its strategic response to incidents affecting the communities of Rhondda Cynon Taf.

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[1] Scour is an engineering term used to describe what happens when holes (also known as scour holes) are caused by active water currents that occur around bridge piers or abutments. When severe erosion of the material at the base of the supporting structure takes place, scour can lead to structural failure of the bridge.

No	Agreed Actions	Qtr 4 Year End Update
		The bids for Welsh Government grant funding for monitoring equipment and installation equipment in 2021/22 have been successful. We are currently identifying the locations and the equipment required. Site-specific surveys will be carried out prior to full installation. Our aim is for all the additional equipment to be installed and functioning prior to Autumn 2021, with an estimated 29 additional monitoring locations making a total of 45 locations to be monitored.
8.	**Create the capacity to be able to provide timely Elected Member and Public Information during Major Emergencies**	We continue to implement the technology required to support intelligence gathering for use in the Emergency Control Centre. This information will inform critical strategic and operational decisions, and help to direct timely communication with residents and businesses etc.
9.	**Create two dedicated Pluvial Drainage Teams, an East, and a West team. The teams will increase the staffing complement in the Drainage teams from 20 to 31 staff, comprising a service manager, two senior drainage engineers and 8 additional operational staff.**	Service changes including additional drainage resources have been progressed to improve surface water drainage maintenance services. Progress to date includes: • The recruitment of a new Principal Drainage Maintenance Engineer who is now in post. A further two Drainage Maintenance Engineers posts will be advertised shortly. • The preparation of tender documents for the procurement of specialised 'Vactor' (high pressure) cleaning services to enable tendering to take place during Qtr 1 2021/22. • Developing the specifications for new additional drainage vehicles.
10.	**Produce on-line information and booklets for flooded households that set out the support available from the Council, and its partners in responding to a household's needs, from securing alternative accommodation, financial support and advice, applications for home repairs assistance, health and wellbeing support, environmental health advice on how to safely clean your home after a flood, and other offers of support from the third sector.**	The evaluation of information collected from the online flood survey and stories is continuing for the 28 flood investigation areas. This feedback has been invaluable in providing qualitative evidence to support the findings of the specialist consultants. Information from Natural Resources Wales (NRW) on each of the 28 flood investigation areas will also help to inform the lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) reports under Section 19 (s19) of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010. It is expected that the first of the reports will be published in July 2021.
11.	**Publish a comprehensive Environmental Strategy by 31 March 2021 that sets out the action the**	A draft Climate Change strategy was considered by the Council's Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group at its meeting on 17 March, and subsequently by the Council's Cabinet on 25

No	Agreed Actions	Qtr 4 Year End Update
	Council will take to ensure it is a Net Zero organisation by 2030 and how it will engage with local communities and businesses to change behaviours to significantly reduce the carbon footprint of the County Borough.	March. The draft Strategy was subject to a wide-ranging Climate Conversation – 'Let's Talk Climate Change RCT' which continued, initially until the end of May 2021. There will be further and more in-depth face to face discussions with residents, schools, and communities when it is safe to do so. The initial feedback arising from the Climate Conversation and also in respect of the draft Strategy, was considered by the Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group at its meeting on 14 June and also the Cabinet, on 24 June 2021.

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RHONDDA CYNON TAF

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2021/22

FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

20th July 2021

TITLE: RHONDDA CYNON TAF TOURISM STRATEGY

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROSPERITY AND DEVELOPMENT IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING (CLLR ROBERT BEVAN)

Author(s): Ian Christopher Strategic Manager, Prosperity & Development

1. **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 The purpose of the report is to set out the results of the public consultation exercise carried out on the draft Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT) Tourism Strategy.

1.2 In addition, this report seeks the views of the Committee on the draft RCT Tourism Strategy as amended, ahead of the Strategy being reported to Cabinet for final approval.

2. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

    It is recommended that the Committee:

2.1 Considers the responses to the public consultation exercise undertaken in respect of the draft RCT Tourism Strategy and determines whether any amendments are required to the proposals, other than those already adopted into the Strategy.

2.2 Provide comments on the draft RCT Tourism Strategy (subject to any amendments that are required as per 2.1 above) prior to the Strategy being reported to Cabinet for final approval.

3. **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

3.1 To deliver upon the Council's commitment to develop and promote RCT as a visitor destination, as set out in RCT Council's Corporate Plan 2020-

2024, "*Making a Difference*" to develop a tourism offer that encourages people to come to the County Borough and includes attractions such as the Rhondda and Abernant Tunnels, the Zip World Tower, Royal Mint Experience, The National Lido for Wales and a Welsh Coal Mining Experience at the Rhondda Heritage Park. To support businesses to develop a range of complementary services to the attractions in RCT including offering accommodation in our town centres, such as boutique hotels, quality bed and breakfast and Airbnb locations.

3.2 To produce a key strategic document and set of priorities, that focus on delivering this commitment for future years, from which action plans can be produced, and resources allocated to deliver the identified and agreed priorities.

4. <u>BACKGROUND</u>

4.1 Between 2014 and 2019, Wales welcomed record numbers of visitors. This is reflected in RCT's visitor numbers, with 1.5 million-day visitors in 2019 and more than 500,000 overnight stays, contributing to just over £179 million to the RCT economy. Over 9% of the workforce in Wales were employed via the tourism sector, with 2000 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) roles supported by tourism in RCT.

4.2 It is clear that tourism has the potential to be the main driver of the local economy and source of employment in certain parts of the County Borough, and that a formalised Strategy is required to underpin and direct all tourism related operations.

4.3 On 23 July 2019 members from the Finance & Performance Scrutiny Committee provided comment and approved the proposed direction of the RCT Tourism Strategy which replaced Destination Rhondda Cynon Taf 2014 - 2020.

4.4 As a result a draft Tourism Strategy was drafted with the overall objective as set out below.

4.5 To maximise the opportunities that marrying our fantastic landscape and heritage with the changing face of tourism presents, the draft RCT Tourism Strategy recommended targeting efforts in the following areas:

1. Product & Attractions
2. Accommodation
3. Accessibility, Infrastructure & Connectivity
4. Skills & Employment
5. Experience

4.6 On 24 March 2020 a Delegated Decision was made to pass the draft RCT Tourism Strategy for public consultation. However, it was on condition that any form of consultation would only commence when it was deemed appropriate in light of the situation posed by COVID-19.

4.7 The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic were global, causing a complete, and in some cases, devastating shut down of the Tourism and Hospitality sector, and this meant that it was not deemed appropriate for public consultation to take place until 17 May 2021.

4.8 On 17 May 2021 a five-week consultation was launched, which asked residents, business owners and visitors for their thoughts in relation to the content of the draft RCT Tourism Strategy. The consultation closed on 18 June 2021.

5. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS / SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY

5.1 An equality Impact Assessment form (EqIA) screening form has been prepared for the purpose of this report. It has been found that a full report is not required at this time.

6. WELSH LANGUAGE IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no Welsh Language implications arising from the report, although any future plans or developments that come from the formulisation of the RCT Tourism Strategy will comply fully with the Welsh Language Measure 2011 and the Welsh Language Standards.

7. CONSULTATION / INVOLVEMENT

7.1 As previously mentioned, on the 24 March 2020, a Delegated Decision was made to initiate a public consultation exercise on the draft RCT Tourism Strategy.

7.2 Below is a summary of the key findings of the consultation on the proposed RCT Tourism Strategy. The full consultation report can be seen in Appendix 1. Overall, the consultation shows that respondents are supportive of the draft Tourism Strategy and its content and welcome the proposals.

Draft RCT Tourism Strategy Consultation

7.3 The 5-week consultation period ran from the 17 May 2021 – 18 June 2021. The main method of data capture was an online questionnaire.

Supplementary to this, a dedicated email address and contact number was supplied via the RCT Consultation website page, that could be used if respondents did not or could not complete the survey via the online questionnaire.

7.4   Promotion of the consultation was focussed on residents, business owners, tourism stakeholders and visitors. Both targeted and organic social media campaigns were employed, together with a dedicated press release and digital promotion via the Council's website. Tourism related partners and businesses were also contacted and supplied with a direct web link to the online questionnaire.

7.5   The summary of the feedback is as follows:

- 321 responses to the online consultation were received.
- 55% of respondents said they were responding as a resident of RCT, whilst 40% said they were responding as a visitor.
- 87% of respondents said they either 'Strongly Agree' or 'Agree' with the vision for the RCT Tourism Strategy.
- Respondents were asked to provide comments for their answer whether they agreed with the vision. The overarching, main comments talked about RCT having many areas of natural beauty, that as a destination RCT has lots of potential and that we need to build upon and promote our experiences and attractions.
- 90% of respondents said they either 'Strongly Agree' or 'Agree' with the statement that RCT's 'landscape', 'culture' and 'heritage' are our key strengths when looking to develop and drive forward a tourism offer.
- Respondents were asked to provide further comments on their chosen answer to the above question. Of the comments provided, the main themes showed an overall agreement with the statement with praise being given in particular to the landscape and outdoor spaces on offer within RCT.
- Respondents were directed to the 5 key themes that are identified within the draft Strategy as priority areas to focus upon, Products and Attractions, Accommodation, Accessibility, Infrastructure and Connectivity, Skills and Employment, Experience. Respondents were asked if they felt there were any other themes they felt should be considered. Of the responses received to this question, the common themes that were identified were "Advertisement / Promotion", "Environmental/Sustainability Considerations", however it worth noting these elements are referenced within the draft Strategy but not as dedicated priority area.
- Respondents were given details of the objectives for each of the themes identified and asked whether they agree with these. The results show that the majority of respondents (Over 89%) agreed with each of the aims outlined.

7.6 Following the consultation exercise, despite the large majority of feedback being positive and in agreement with the contents of the Strategy, some common underlying themes were noted, and as such the draft RCT Tourism Strategy has been updated to take these into account. These include reference to:

- 'Motorhomes', whereby an inclusion has been inserted within the 'Accommodation' theme, to capture their rise in popularity.
- 'Marketing and promotion', to signify the importance of more targeted campaigns that promote RCT as a destination, which utilise the availability of digital tactics such as social media.

7.7 Other amends have also been included to reflect key updates from when the Strategy was initially written, such as reference to:

- 'Zip World Tower', as the visitor attraction is now open to the general public, and this is the correct brand for the product/site.
- The Council's Corporate Plan "Making a Difference" (2020 – 2024), and it's tourism focused priorities, which replaced the previous Corporate Plan "The Way Ahead" (2016 – 2020).
- Up-to-date and relevant statistics for both the Employer's Skill Survey Wales Report (2019) and Global Adventure Tourism Marketing Report (2020 – 2030), replacing previous versions, from which statistics had been referenced.
- 'Bryn Gobaith Farm' under the 'Experience' theme, has been removed, as it's offering no longer fits with the context of this Strategy.

The updated draft RCT Tourism Strategy can be seen in Appendix 2.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

8.1 There are no direct financial implications in formalising the RCT Tourism Strategy, but as the opportunities are developed, the financial implications will be fully assessed, and where appropriate reported and the necessary approvals sought.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS *OR* LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

9.1 There are no current legal implications, but as the opportunities are developed, the legal implications will be fully assessed.

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

10.1 The delivery of this draft RCT Tourism Strategy will contribute to the Council's corporate priorities:

- People – are independent, healthy, and successful.
- Places – where people are proud to live, work, and play.
- Prosperity - creating the opportunity for people & businesses to be innovative, be entrepreneurial and fulfil their potential & prosper.

10.2 RCT Council's Corporate Pan 2020-2024, "*Making a Difference*" identifies positioning RCT as a visitor destination, developing a tourism offer that encourages people to come to the County Borough and includes attractions such as the Rhondda and Abernant Tunnels, the Zip World Tower, Royal Mint Experience, The National Lido for Wales and a Welsh Coal Mining Experience at the Rhondda Heritage Park. It identifies that we as a Council will support businesses to develop a range of complementary services including offering accommodation in our town centres, such as boutique hotels, quality bed and breakfast and Airbnb locations.

10.3 The draft RCT Tourism Strategy's primary objective is to increase and sustain the economic growth of tourism in RCT, encouraging skills development and providing well paid secure employment for the local workforce. Tourism product development, especially in the outdoors (trails development, for example) will have an associated outcome of providing wellbeing opportunities for residents, enabling greater access to their outdoors and green leisure corridors.

10.4 The Sustainable Development Principle and five ways of working have been incorporated into the RCT Tourism Strategy in the following ways:

- Long term - Immediate short-term tourism developments shall take into account long term requirements. For example, well paid, sustainable job creation and the consideration of biodiversity and eco systems management within tourism product planning
- Integration - Integration of wellbeing plans and goals from different organisations will be taken into account by undertaking partnership working. Wellbeing Tourism has been identified as a theme to explore further within the Strategy
- Collaboration & Involvement - The Tourism Strategy will involve a number of relevant partners and organisations in its delivery and collaborate with them to ensure strategic objectives are met.
- Prevention - By working with the right people at the right time, as identified in the "Next Steps" section of the Tourism Strategy, we will seek to mitigate against any risks and problems presenting themselves to achieve the best possible wellbeing outcomes for our communities by implementing actions to deliver against the strategic tourism objectives

10.5   This approach makes a direct contribution to the seven national well-being goals, in particular:

- A Healthier Wales (allowing greater access to the outdoors through trails and product development)
- A Prosperous Wales (providing an environment within which home-grown tourism businesses can flourish)
- Resilient and cohesive communities (the unique selling point of our Destination is our communities and the warm welcome they provide to visitors. The Tourism Strategy will support the vibrancy of such communities through localised infrastructure, connectivity and product development)
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language (our culture will be celebrated as a reason to visit RCT and opportunities have been identified for bespoke Welsh Language tourism packages to be developed).

10.6   The Tourism Strategy will also seek to address priorities within:

- Prosperity For All: The National Strategy 2017
- The Environment (Wales) Act 2016
- Cardiff Capital Region City Deal & Valleys Task Force Delivery Plans
- Our Cwm Taf – Public Service Board (PSB) Well-Being Plan 2018-2023
- Rural Development Programme (RDP) – Cwm Taf Local Development Plan

11.   CONCLUSION

11.1   A RCT Tourism Strategy has been produced, which highlights key tourism related priorities and will be used to underpin all work and effort, ensuring a coordinated and integrated approach – this is currently in draft format.

11.2   This report sets out the results of the public consultation exercise carried out on the draft RCT Tourism Strategy, identifying that overall, respondents are supportive of the Strategy and its contents, and welcome the proposals.

11.2   The draft RCT Tourism Strategy has been updated to incorporate some minor amends (brought about from comments put forward during the consultation) and it is recommended in this report that this Committee endorses this Strategy document.

Other Information:-

Relevant Scrutiny Committee
ARTICLE 6 – OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
(Terms of Reference of each of the Scrutiny Committees to assist Officers
  with selecting the correct Committee.)

Contact Officer:
Ian Christopher, Strategic Manager (07795 391 855)

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

A DISCUSSION PAPER FOR A PRIVATE MEETING OF THE CABINET

DATE

REPORT OF (DIRECTORATE) IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER (CLLRS)

Item:

Background Papers

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

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

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

Officer to contact:

Ian Christopher, Strategic Manager (07795 391 855)
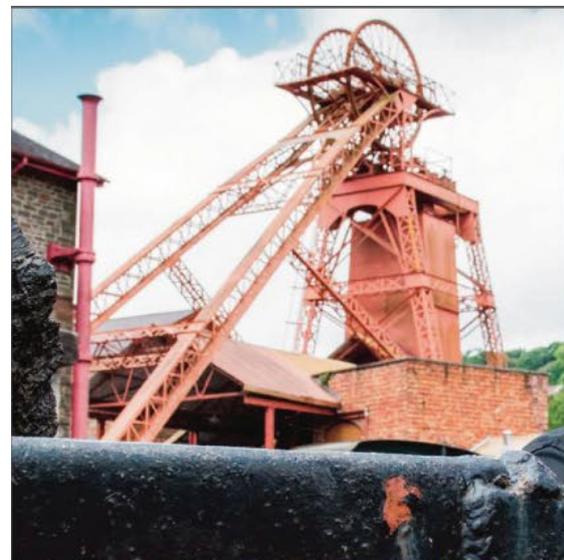
Consultation Report

Draft Tourism Strategy

June 2021

HAVE YOUR SAY — DWEUD EICH DWEUD

RHONDDA CYNON TAF

CONTENTS

2

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- This section provides a summary of the main findings from the consultation.

- The purpose of the consultation was to gather views on the Draft Tourism Strategy proposal.

- The consultation was conducted in-house. The consultation period ran from the 17th May 2021 – 18th June 2021.

- 321 responses to the online consultation were received.

- 55% of respondents said they were responding as a resident of Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT) whilst 40% said they were responding as a visitor.

- 87% of respondents said they either 'Strongly Agree' or 'Agree' with the vision for the tourism strategy.

- Respondents were asked to provide comments for their answer whether they agreed with the vision. The following are the overarching, main themes identified in the open responses,

    - Agree: RCT has many areas of natural beauty
    - Agree: RCT needs to build upon and promote its experiences and attractions
    - Agree: RCT has lots of potential to build upon tourism offers

- 90% of respondents said they either 'Strongly Agree' or 'Agree' with the statement that RCT's 'landscape', 'culture' and 'heritage' are our key strengths when looking to develop and drive forward a tourism offer.

- Respondents were asked to provide further comments on their chosen answer to the above question. Of the comments provided, the main themes showed an overall agreement with the statement with praise being given in particular to the landscape and outdoor spaces on offer within RCT.

- Respondents were directed to the 5 key themes that are identified within the draft strategy as priority areas to focus upon, Products and Attractions, Accommodation, Accessibility, Infrastructure and Connectivity, Skills and Employment, Experience.Respondents were asked if they felt there were any other themes they felt should be considered. Of the responses received to this question, the overarching common themes that were identified are as follows:

    - Advertisement / Promotion of tourism offers: A number of comments identified the requirement to boldly advertise and promote the tourism

offers within RCT to a wider audience. The use of media / tv and a focus on tourists entering via airports were also identified.

- Environmental considerations / sustainability of tourism offers: There were also a number of comments that noted the requirement to ensure that the environmental impact of tourism is considered as well as ensuring the sustainability of tourism attractions.

- Hospitality Sector / Accommodation: A number of comments highlighted the importance of focusing on providing suitable accommodation offers within the borough. A number of respondents were owners of motorhomes and a particular theme emerged from these respondents in relation to having adequate spaces to park vehicles and access facilities within RCT.

• Respondents were given details of the objectives for each of the themes identified and asked whether they agree with these. The results show that the majority of respondents (Over 89%) agreed with each of the aims outlined.

• Respondents were invited to provide any comments in relation to their selection of answers in the above question. The following are the overarching, main themes identified in the open responses:-

  o Accommodation: Several comments were again provided by owners of motorhomes for this section. The comments again highlighted requirements for suitable locations to park vehicles and have access to facilities close to attractions.
  o Accessibility / Infrastructure: There were also a number of comments that highlighted the importance of having tourism offers that were easily accessible across the borough although the impacts of infrastructure on the environment and a desire to ensure the natural beauty of areas remains unaffected also came through in these comments.
  o Inclusion of local people: A number of comments made by residents responding to the survey indicated a desire for tourism to be inclusive of residents and not solely for the requirements of visitors from outside the area.

4

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1   This report presents the findings of a consultation on the Draft Tourism Strategy proposal.

1.2   Section 2 outlines the background to the proposal and the draft vision that was consulted on.

1.3   Section 3 details the methodology used.

1.4   Section 4 presents an analysis of the consultation results.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1   Over the last five years, Wales has welcomed record numbers of visitors. This is reflected in RCT's visitor numbers, with 1.5 million-day visitors in 2019 and more than 500,000 overnight stays. Over 9% of the workforce in Wales is now employed in tourism. It is one of the country's fastest growing sectors and it is estimated that tourism was worth just over £179 million to the RCT economy in 2019 and employed more than 2000 people. It is clear that tourism has the potential to be the main driver of the local economy and source of employment in large parts of the County Borough.

2.2   Evidently the tourism industry is changing. People are moving away from traditional package holidays and instead are increasingly piecing together their own getaways, predominantly through the internet, seeking an 'experience' based break or holiday with the ubiquitous opportunity for a once in a lifetime selfie.

2.3   To maximise the opportunities that marrying our fantastic landscape and heritage with the changing face of tourism presents, the Draft Tourism Strategy recommends that we target our efforts in the following areas:
1. Product & Attractions
2. Accommodation
3. Accessibility, Infrastructure & Connectivity
4. Skills & Employment
5. Experience

5

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 The purpose of the consultation was to gather views on the Draft Tourism Strategy proposal.

3.2 The consultation period ran from 17th May 2021 – 18th June 2021.

3.3 An online survey was designed and made available via the council's consultation webpages. Social Media was used to promote the survey and shared via the councils Twitter page. Contact was made directly with businesses signed up to the Tourism Hub.

3.4 321 responses to the questionnaire were received. The results are outlined in this report.

4 CONSULTATION RESULTS

4.1 Respondents were asked to what extent they agree with the vision for tourism set out in this strategy?

"To establish RCT as the premier destination in the UK for 'experience' based visits and vacations, showcasing our first class landscape, culture and heritage."

The results show that 87% of respondents either Strongly Agree or Agree with the vision.
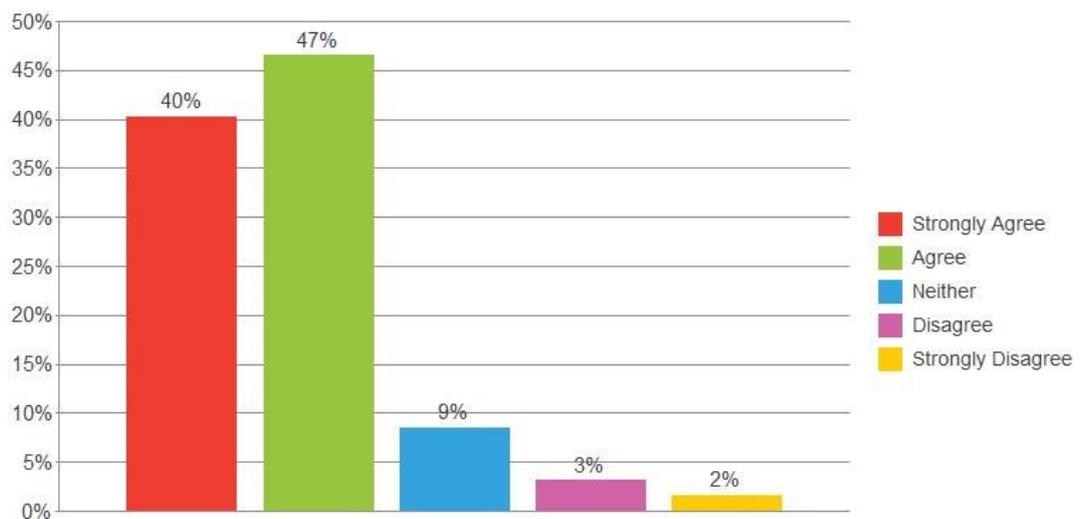
Figure 1 – Agreement with vision for strategy

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4.2   Respondents were asked to provide any comments in relation to their answer and of those received, the following themes emerged:

Natural beauty of area

Comments were made highlighting the advantages the natural landscapes provide in RCT. Respondents felt that the variety and geography of the borough was a unique selling point. Comments included:

"This area has an outstanding geography and such variety, most people are unaware of this as they may have had no reason to visit. Drawing the attention of the media through events and experience-based activities would draw attention to what we have to offer. Sports events, cycling, triathlons, marathons and music or food festivals appeal to lots of age groups."

"Our landscape & countryside is second to none."

"RCT must play to its strengths, dynamic, countryside, mountains fresh and the weather."

"We have majestic mountains, wonderful waterfalls and spectacular scenery. All of it easily accessed from the main towns."

Experiences / Attractions valuable asset

Another theme that emerged in this section was that RCT should build upon the attractions in place and strive to provide good experiences and a variety of experiences based on the resources the local areas have to offer.

"We have to have product which will encourage more than just a day visit to the area, which means several large attractions to keep visitors busy enough to stay and experience the environment and communities over a sustained period."

"Have holidayed for many years with my family in the French Alps and often commented that we could be doing similar at home and that we should be doing more to promote and use our landscape etc. Activities in France included paragliding, canyoning, white water rafting, treetops, zip wires, gorge walking/scrambling, cycling, walking, waterfalls, paddle boarding, museums, world war heritage sites and graves etc."

"I love the lido and the views for walks"

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"People are drawn to new and exciting experiences and days out. For example, beautiful scenery or wild swimming spots posted on Instagram attract many people to go out and experience this for themselves."

Potential to build upon

There were also a number of comments that showed agreement with the aims of the strategy but also indicated that the areas within RCT that had lots of potential to be improved and built upon.

"I was born in RCT and have returned on many an occasion. I know that there is lots to do and see in the area and what wonderful scenery there is to be seen. Encouraging tourism is key to re-building local business especially now post-Covid."

"There is a lot of unused potential (e.g. lack of marked trails) in the hills surrounding the Rhondda and towns which are in need of refurbishments."

"RCT is a gorgeous part of the world and can offer a great deal. Investment in the local infrastructure needs to be made to match this vision."

4.3 Respondents were asked to indicate to what extent they agree that RCT's landscape, culture and heritage are our key strengths when looking to develop and drive forward a tourism offer. The majority of respondents (90%) 'Strongly Agreed' or 'Agreed' with this statement.

To what extent do you agree that RCT's 'landscape', 'culture' and 'heritage' are our key strengths when looking to develop and drive forward a tourism offer?

Strongly Agree: 48%
Agree: 42%
Neither: 5%
Disagree: 2%
Strongly Disagree: 3%
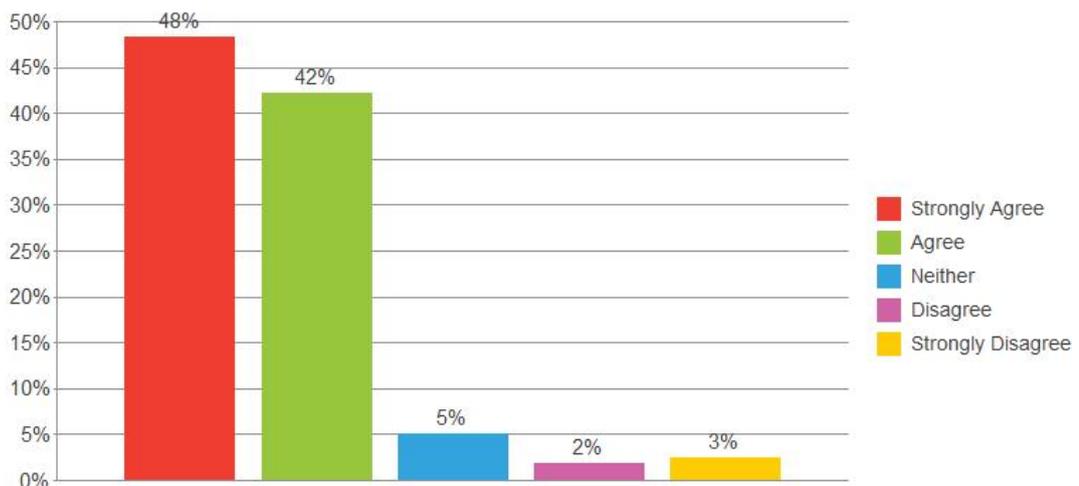
Figure 2 – Agreement with RCT's key strengths

Of those that strongly agree or agreed, some comments included:

"I Completely agree with this. We do have a beautiful landscape, although certain areas could do with a clean-up, and an interesting heritage and culture. We should definitely take advantage of this."

"RCT has so much mining heritage and amazing scenery that could be promoted."

"During lockdown and having to stay local I have found so many additional places of beauty in the landscape that I didn't know about before. Past culture of mining especially is very interesting to me and I have always loved going for a day out to learn more."

"We have beautiful landscapes and scenery and this should be developed alongside the historical events linked to them."

4.4   There were some comments that agreed with the statement, however they also indicated further ways in which they felt RCT could enhance its offer.

"Our countryside is stunning and awe inspiring. But our people litter and don't value where we live. This needs to change and there needs to be a stronger litter picking workforce…"

"The area has the foundation to build on I agree. However, you need to step up and promote what's on offer, poor signage throughout RCT is an issue."

"RCT has all 3 categories in abundance, although awareness across the rest of the UK and Europe is very low. Other Celtic nations, particularly Scotland and Ireland have established both national and regional identities based on these 3 categories, which are recognisable worldwide but Wales and RCT have so much to offer but often overlooked for Tourism."

4.5   Respondents were shown the 5 key themes that have been identified within the draft strategy as priority areas to focus upon and were asked if there were any others they felt should be considered.

Of the comments received in this section, the following themes emerged:

<u>Advertising / Promotion</u>

Comments were made in relation to the promotion and advertisement of the tourism offers within RCT. Some comments indicated the benefits of ensuring that a wide range of events are held and promoted widely. There were also comments made regarding the promotion / signposting of local attractions.

"Promote Big events to draw people into the area who may then come back in the future, cycling or running events, live comedy or music festivals. We need a Greenman or Food festival like Abergavenny, Real ale Octoberfest idea."

"Signposting Walking routes and signage natural beauty community."

"Community. Engaging more with local communities to encourage better collaboration that will in-turn produce better outcomes.."

"Promotion of all the above."

"Advertising and showing people what is out there."

Environment / Sustainability

The environment and ensuring that tourism offers are sustainable and with a focus on nature and the ecology of local areas also emerged as a common theme in the comments for this section.

"Environmental impact. We need keep all these things sustainable for future generations.."

"Ensuring that it is eco- friendly and sustainable."

"Sustainability with a focus on reducing the impact on the environment of encouraging mass tourism."

"Sustainability should be number one - promoting active travel, cycle parking at every attraction and disincentive to car driving."

"Ecology. Rewilding and reforesting could add to the attractions of the landscape"

Hospitality / Accommodation (including Motorhomes)

There were also comments relating to the hospitality and accommodation offers provided within RCT and the importance of ensuring these offers are well supported and promoted.

"Food is an important part of the visitor experience and there is a lack of appealing places to eat near many really beautiful outdoor areas."

"Where does hospitality fit in this - lots of good pubs and restaurants as well as cafe's."

"Accommodation is sadly lacking, infrastructure awful.."

"More hotels need to bring people in"

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"Hospitality - encouraging local businesses & accommodation providers to develop their hospitality skills in relation to welcoming visitors and helping them with information and advice. Becoming ambassador's for the region!."

4.6 There were also a number of comments made in relation to accommodation provision for motor homeowners.

"More diverse types of accommodation are needed, I would like to see a dedicated motor home park".

"Facilities for motorhomes and camper and near to town centres. These tourists can provide a year-round source of income for businesses and tend to prefer more central parking due to the fact that they are much less manoeuvrable then the cars which tow caravans. Hence remote campsites are much less suitable for their needs."

"Under 'Accommodation', please bear in mind the needs of the Motor homer, which does not mean campsites. What we need is suitable places to park during the day (so that we can spend time and money in towns and attractions) and continental-style Aires to stay overnight and/or empty our waste. Please refer to the CAMPfRA website."

"Campsites and motorhome parking for short stops."

4.7 Respondents were given details of the objectives for each of the themes identified and asked whether they agree with these. The results sown that the majority of respondents (over 89%) agreed with each of the aims outlined.

	Yes (%)	No (%)	Don't know (%)
Product and Attractions – "build upon our existing visitor products and attractions to develop a number of high-quality unique visitor offerings, that can create itineraries and packages, to provide short and long stay opportunities."	93.2	4.2	2.6
Accommodation – "increase the amount of accommodation available in the County Borough which needs to be of high quality, varied in nature and will also appeal to a wide range of visitors."	89.7	5.8	4.5

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Accessibility, Infrastructure and Connectivity – "develop transport links and public transport availability, car parking, signage, accessible facilities and an understanding how they interconnect."	97.1	1.6	1.3
Skills and Employment – "encouraging the development of tourism related skills and supporting the creation of well paid, secure jobs within the industry for local residents."	95.1	2.3	2.6
Experience – "provide a first class, positive and unique experience which visitors will want to repeat and tell others about."	97.4	1.0	1.6

Figure 3 – Agreement with objectives for each theme

4.8 Respondents were asked to provide any comments in relation to their answers for this section. Of the comments received, the following themes emerged:

Accommodation (incl. Motorhome)

The provision of suitable accommodation emerged as a theme in this section. Once again, the provision of accommodation / suitable locations for motorhome owners also became a prevalent theme.

"We need more, good quality accommodation within RCT."

"Accommodation is in very short supply and needs to be improved to keep people in RCT for more than day trippers. If they can stay local they will shop and eat local too."

"Accommodation is not that readily available, are there any camp sites or glamping sites?"

"Remember that accommodation isn't just hotels, B&Bs, campsites - it means accommodation for motorhome tourism too."

Accessibility / Infrastructure

The accessibility of the local area and the need for visitors to be able to easily access any tourism offers was highlighted by a number of comments in this section. There were also a number of comments made in relation to the impacts any changes to infrastructure may have on the environment and the number of cars being used in local areas with an

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emphasis on the requirement for adequate public transport options for residents and visitors.

"Accessibility throughout the Rhondda needs to be urgently looked into. Lack of public car parks at treorchy for visitors/shoppers."

"Accessibility needs to be in line with Wales Gov climate change strategy. Walking and cycling most important, public transport next, with private car journeys last. This applies to staff and supplier journeys as well as visitor journeys."

"Ensure that infrastructure and connectivity has a focus on being able to use transport into RCT rather than out of RCT to the likes of Cardiff, Swansea etc."

"As much as possible, travel by private transport should be discouraged. We don't want more roads and traffic."

"Public transport links are especially important as it would be beneficial to the area as a whole to improve these."

Inclusion of local people

There were a number of comments made in relation to the importance of involving local people and gaining the buy in of local residents as a vital factor in ensuring any tourism offers are successful. The importance of jobs being accessed by local people also emerged as a theme in this section. Some comments included:

"I feel that the creation of jobs for local people is of great importance."

"If this is to be done well and we are to attract the right people into the tourism roles from the first contact person (the most important) to the, waiter/waitress, B&B owner or tourism product manager then all have to have the same welcoming ethos and be trained how best to serve the customer and this can't be done on the cheap. All roles need to be trained and paid a good wage so that the best people are attracted to the jobs.."

"In terms of experience, using the local population to converse with tourists will make an experience more memorable. For example advertising new activities to residents as well as tourists will ensure residents will meet tourists as residents will then go to these new or improved activities."

"Attractions…need to be accessible to locals."

4.9   Respondents were asked to provide any other comments they may have in relation to the draft strategy. The following themes emerged in the comments:

Promotion of the area

The benefits of promoting the offer available within RCT and the importance of advertising events and attractions was highlighted by a number of comments. Suggestions were made for avenues to further promote the tourism offers in the area through airports and utilising media outlets.

"We must sell & project ourselves with positive words and images and stop talking about deprivation and coal. There are only an aging small population that remember coal yet we're still banging on about it. we must advertise what beauty & nature & community we have."

"Advertise your amazing Lido and initiatives like the Big Run - both wheelchair accessible and welcoming !"

"It is a really exciting plan, hope the tunnel goes ahead in Abernant! Will need more coverage on the media, Weatherman walking style or wildlife programs to introduce the area to the wider world. Have noticed S4C do a lot of outdoor activities coverage, be great to get them on board. Good luck!"

"Let's promote our fabulous Rhondda at Cardiff and Bristol airport, Cardiff rail station, offer easy transport links and sightseeing packages to visitors including walking tours, half a day, full day, two sat, weeklong etc."

"I live in Rhondda Cynon Taff and it's a beautiful place with a beautiful name and it needs to be front and centre of all literature promoting the area!"

Motorhomes

Owners of motorhomes who responded to the survey made a number of comments once again highlighting their requests for the provision of parking / facilities to access in the borough.

"Please consider the use of Aires - overnight parking for self-contained motorhomes, with or without basic services, for a modest fee. Aires can be sited on car parks which are not needed at night (e.g. car parks at visitor attractions). They provide a parking space only, so do not allow the use of tents, awnings, BBQs etc. However Aires encourage motorhomers to stay in an area thus accessing visitor attractions and local amenities and boosting the local economy."

"It would be great to see your area activity encouraging Motorcaravan tourists by providing 'Aires' as an alternative to traditional campsites. These can easily be set up by allowing overnight parking of Motorcaravans in car parks that would otherwise empty overnight."

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"Offer a range of parking and servicing options for motorhome and campervan users, who are self contained and wanting easy and good value places to stay where we can spend our time and money supporting your region's business."

"I am a Motorhome owner and have visited your area when my son was at university in Pontypridd. I struggled to find anywhere to park up for the night when we came down to see him. A Motorhome aire which consists of somewhere to park with access to fresh water and toilet emptying facility would be extremely useful and would bring in a huge number of Motorhomers."

Agree / Support for strategy

There were a number of comments highlighting respondent's support and enthusiasm for the aims and objectives set out in the strategy. These were from residents and visitors.

"As a very passionate 'RCT' man its really good to see and feel RCT's ambition to make it happen. Why can't we be up there with the best. The legacy of a first-class environment will be job security and bright future for the county."

"I think as a whole it is a fantastic project if done thoroughly and correctly."

"I think it is a really good strategy to revive the economy of a beautiful area."

*"Very satisfied by the suggestions and look forwards to seeing them come to fruition."*

"We have as much to offer as many other destinations in Wales. This is very promising for the area."

"I think it is excellent and very well thought-out. I hope that tourism in the area really takes off."

"Excellent idea to promote tourism as the area returns to its natural beauty and landscape."

4.10   Respondents were asked to identify whether they were a resident / visitor / business or other. The results show that the majority of respondents were residents in RCT (55%) although a high number were responding as visitors (40%).

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Are you responding as a:
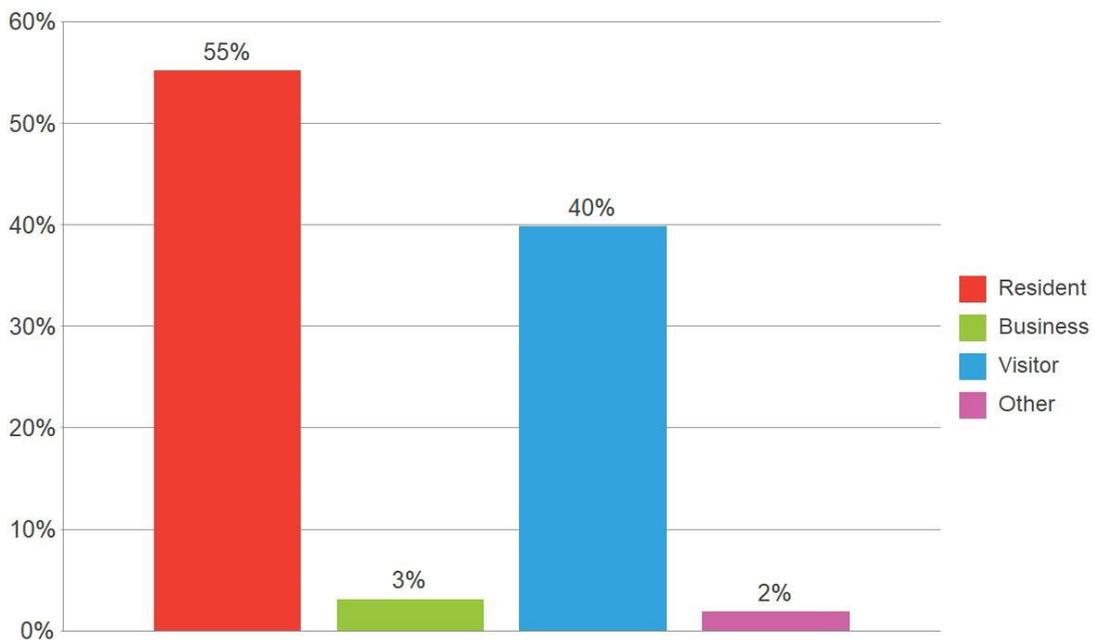
Figure 4 – Respondent information

Equalities

4.11 Under the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duties, the Council has a legal duty to look at how its decisions impact on people because they may have particular characteristics like the ones above. Respondents were asked whether or not the strategy would affect them because of their:

- Gender,
- Age,
- Ethnicity,
- Disability,
- Sexuality,
- Religion / belief,
- Gender identity,
- Relationship status,
- Pregnancy and
- Preferred language

4.12 Comments received were split into the following categories and a selection of comments can be found below:

Gender

" safety - being female there is always a security aspect to be concerned over. I love walking Clydach Lakes and you get to know local walkers. If*

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*we attract tourists to the lakes how exactly will we ensure walkers stay safe? As we know from recent events, women's safety is a matter we need to address. I would love to see some additional security measures up on the walk from the bottom lake to the top lake * safety is a concern. If we attract tourists we need to ensure and additional people at places used by residents will remain safe…."*

"i'm transgender, toilets are always a concern. gender neutral bathrooms should be important in all our tourism places."

Accessibility / Disabilities

"Accessibility and a changing places toilet would be great for everyone"

"Accommodation is often not accessible, parking and public transport options are a long way from tourist facilities. Pontypridd train station has awful access for disabled, as well as being an intimidating place for women, older & younger people, etc."

"Accessibility is a big factor with public transport links"

"Disability: Ample accessible parking at attractions is important to me"

"Ensure any employment created is accessible, available and inclusive to all of the above"

"You have successfully addressed disability with your accessibility at the Lido / Ponty Park ! Thank you !"

Welsh language

"Welsh should be promoted and everyone included regardless of any differences"

"Stop putting everything in Welsh it really puts off our English friends they find it demeaning!"

"As a Welsh leaner I would like to see more use of the Welsh language in RCT, I feel this is another aspect of culture and heritage that visitors are often unaware of when visiting Wales and could give other UK residents and Europeans a wider understanding of its history."

"I think it is important that the Welsh language is promoted during this. For example, if there are going to be additional signs out up, they should have both English and Welsh on them."

Sexuality / LGBTQ+

"If the strategy focused more on working with communities then it would be able to recognise where those with different characteristics could play

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more of a role. For example there is a strong lgbtq+ community here... is their voice represented in some of the thinking behind events which could encourage visitors?"

Welsh Language

4.13   Under the Welsh Language Measure 2011 and Welsh Language Standards the Council has a legal duty to look at how its decisions impact on the Welsh Language.   Respondents were asked if they felt the strategy could impact opportunities for people to use and promote the Welsh Language (Positive or Negative) and if in any way it treats the Welsh Language less favourably than the English Language.

4.14   They were also asked to comment on how positive effects could be increased, or negative effects be decreased. A selection of comments can be found below:

Signage, Information and Welsh speaking staff

"After living for some years in a country that had signs in a dual language (Canada) you need to strongly encourage the Welsh language culture"

"All information and staff should be bilingual, with Welsh as first option."

"Besides signage in Welsh you might want to consider Welsh speaking guides at the tourist centres"

"Continue to provide Welsh and English mediums for communications, signage and perhaps also more opportunities to educate locals and visitors about the Welsh language."

"Ensure all tourist sites are bilingual and spaces for Welsh speaking communities are created. As a Welsh learner it would be great to access this information at tourist sites to help my language learning and for new spaces/sites to be created for the Welsh speaking community I can participate in"

Sports

"A positive would be to help those language with popular Welsh phrases and/history of an area! Well developed sports clubs are also a way of making improvements as lots of people visit for game days and when they see he start of the clubs would not want to return !"

Heritage and Culture

"Although I understand the push for Welsh as a language, I value Wales as a place more. Bringing tourism to the area and allowing people the

opportunity to learn about our heritage and communities should be a priority over what language the toilet signs are."

"Anything which promotes the Welsh language is to be applauded. Any opportunities to introduce visitors to the Welsh language and Welsh culture would be great. Having lived in Wales, and having Welsh-speaking family, I know that some visitors see the use of the Welsh language as some sort of barrier, failing to recognise that it is a living language and the first language of many residents. Providing information about the culture would be beneficial."

Promotion of the Welsh Language

"As a non welsh speaker, I think it's a positive to promote the language but not to impact on opportunities of non welsh speakers."

"……. I believe the strategy should positively impact and promote the Welsh language and its historical significance. It's language is Wales unique selling point, it differentiates us from the other parts of the UK, we need to weave this into our tourism industry to promote and develop Wales as a unique country with its own identity, culture, history and landscape."

"Every opportunity should be taken in delivering the objectives to promote the Welsh Language e.g. signage, bilingual tours, welsh history"

"Foreign visitors often expect us to speak Welsh and are interested in the language would be good to promote it where we can"

"Gives an opportunity to promote the Welsh language in the borough . I think using Welsh more would be beneficial to the tourism offering ."

"Having just returned from a holiday in North Wales I can say I found the promotion of the Welsh language & culture there to be both fulsome and a unique selling point that was appreciated by visitors (English & Welsh alike) and definitely a positive!"

Other

"Encourage S4C to make programs in RCT."

"I don't know if it would have a positive or negative effect on Welsh language; I would hope it can be positive to some degree by promoting Welsh culture and identity to enhance the experience and educate visitors to the area"

"I don't think the Welsh Language would be treated less favourably and I'm sure opportunities for those people whose native tongue is Welsh should be encouraged if they wish to speak the language."

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"If the strategy is implemented mindfully then it could increase opportunities to promote Welsh and Welsh language learning. The usual bilingual signage etc helps. Promoting Welsh food and menus and local sourcing could help culturally too."

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Draft Tourism Strategy

All Open Comments

June 2021

1

Please tell us why (extent of agreement with vision for tourism strategy)

The Rhondda is beautiful and has been over looked for years
Beautiful scenery, walks and experiences all add to the attraction of the area.
We do have a lot of potential, with many attractions already it would be perfect to expand on this
That's a bold statement with no real substance to it as yet.
The landscape is one of the regions key selling points, and through sustainable tourism this could be an important lever for future economic security
I don't like all these so-called adrenaline junkie activities. I think the zipwire looks ugly , a blight on the landscape. I don't think RCT is a place people want to visit in all honesty. Maybe they would pass through on the way to Cardiff or the coast or Mid Wales. With all due respect for our proud, historic area, it's not an attractive place. There is nowhere nice to stay. Our people are warm and friendly but - and I know this will upset some- there're quite a few insular people in the Valleys with quite "old-fashioned" views. A little bit behind the times cuturally too. These are my people, but it's the truth. Where on earth would people stay on RCT? Very few really nice places to eat/drink. A bit backward. Sorry. It's true. The valleys are always behind the times. Things many people say and attitudes are a little bit cringe-making sometimes. My family are from RCT so I know whereof I speak! And I've worked here listening to embarrassing twp views from colleagues.
Rhondda Cynon Taff has much to offer and we need to make people aware
We have to have product which will encourage more than just a day visit to the area, which means several large attractions to keep visitors busy enough to stay and experience the environment and communities over a sustained period. This is as well as needing further development of essential mix of accomodation as referenced later.
Because RCT has a lot to offer in terms of tourism and this may help to regenerate/refocus our declining towns which are appalling.
We got to sell RCT to people
Under utilised resources..beautiful area
This area has an outstanding geography and such variety, most people are unaware of this as they may have had no reason to visit. Drawing the attention of the media through events and experience based activities would draw attention to what we have to offer. Sports events, cycling, triathlons, marathons and music or food festivals appeal to lots of age groups.
Good idea but in reality a lot of work needs doing , drive from Derby to Matlock and see the difference.

2

We have easily as good town centres, attractions and areas of outstanding beauty as anywhere else in Wales. Excellent walking and cycling etc. but people choose to go elsewhere.
road signs should be readerbull if not then they should be changed you dont want vister getting lost   and not able to read road signs because the letters are warnout
I left the Rhondda for university in 1991, I come back a lot. My husband and children have come with me and when I come home, we go for walks, go to bike park Wales, mountain bike, go to Cardiff, Swansea and spend money in shops. The walks are beautiful. I love the place I grew up and love coming home for all the reason in your strategy. I have a house in Tynewydd that is my second home. I can't emphasise enough how wonderful visitors to the Rhondda think it is and it needs to be Showcased, it rivals places like Castleford in the Peak District and that has millions of tourists each year.
We should value our heritage, culture and our amazing surroundings! Promoting this will encourage investment bringing jobs for a more sustainable future for RCT.
Gravity bike trails would be fantastic
There are many heritage based attractions in RCT to draw visitors to the area.
We have several excellent tourism sites and nature spots within the county that would be ideal for tourists
It must be done sensitively with regard to residents of the area
Unnecessarily hubristic.
Need the visitors to help local economy
It promotes RCT as a destination with a strong and diverse offering for tourism
The most disadvantaged area and you'll probably give it away free!!
The premier destination in the UK is unlikely to be achieved when there are other ex industrial towns/ landscapes to compete with
Unlikely RCT would be the premier as opposed a premier destination. Sloppy language.
Have holidayed for many years with my family in the French Alps and often commented that we could be doing similar at home and that we should be doing more to promote and use our landscape etc. Activities in France included paragliding, canyoning, white water rafting, tree tops, zip wires, gorge walking/scrambling, cycling, walking, waterfalls, paddle boarding, museums, world war heritage sites and graves etc
It's just hell to park there , no signs for the lido no way of parking ,absolutely awful traffic works etc no information visible for the park
Premier destination is a bit extreme
Tourists are good for the economy.
Bit ambitious to say premier destination but good to soon high

3

I didn't put "strongly agree" as I think that other areas will be chasing the same goals and I am not sure South East Wales can out compete them.
Show off your amazing assets like the Lido !
There are such interesting historical features in the area which we should take pride in
Because I don't think RCT comes to mind when people from outside Wales plan a trip here
I love the lido and the views for walks
There is lots to do
Using local people with local knowledge, they will be able to provide a great experience
We are past the days of industry. We are on the foothills of the Brecon Beacons, with easy transport links to the rest of the U.K. we have such an opportunity for adventure tourism here, it would be an borderline criminal to squander it.
Experience provides a perception of organised activities. There is a big benefit about freedom of walking in hills etc
Cardiff will always be the premier destination
Premier is a bit ridiculous, yes its important to develop tourism but don't imagine you can compete with Cardiff or other counties
this should have been developed years ago, why has it taken the arrival of zip world to kick start the Authority? Stop talking about coal and start talking about what we have to offer not just tourists but residents
RCT has the opportunity for tourism but no a "premier destination"
To bring jobs, to encourage people that live there to stay
Encouraging visitors can only be an asset, whilst providing more activities for our own residents.
I can see no other reasons to visit the area.
Tourism is the way forward for the post industrial valleys.
Having grown up in RCT and moved away from the area. I honestly believe RCT will never be 'the premium destination in the UK for experiences'.
Needs to incorporate engagement
Because the scenery here is so beautiful,
It's a good starting point to build on, but I doubt there's enough to class it as premier.
The valleys mining history and landscape lends itself perfectly to tourism. We need to maximise on this.
Not sure it could be the premier destination - one of several in the UK, perhaps.
I love nearby so great to have additional activities nearby.
Our landscape & countryside is second to none.
There are many places in the UK that have long-standing success in 'experience' based visits, such as the Lake District. The vision statement should be clearer on exactly what niche market it is aiming for.

4

I think this is a very good idea. However, there has to be more investment in certain towns/villages so they look more presentable and welcoming. Furthermore, a lot of emphasis should be put on the environment whilst doing this as the amount of people who take part is 'eco-tourism' is increasing.
RCT will never be able to rely on mining or production again for generating income to the valley. However we have breathtaking scenery which should be taken advantage of. With improved advertising and encouragement the Rhondda could cash in with tourism.
No heavy industry will ever come back to the valley. Let's use our natural resources, beauty?
Get the "Rhondda Tunnel" open, 8th wonder of the world....
The area needs to benefit from the tourism jobs etc. We need more hotels that would accommodate this and infrastructure to accommodate more visitors.
I agree that RCT has a wealth of natural beauty, culture and heritage.
Embracing the three key areas outlined above - landscape, culture and heritage - absolutely highlights the main USP / appeal to visitors for RCT
It's a laudable aim but RCT won't be considered « premier » up against national competition like the Lake District, various National Parks etc. RCT does have beautiful scenery but it's not in that class. Therefore the aim seems a bit over blown.
I wouldn't call it premier destination yet. There is a lot of areas that can be improved in RCT to promote it for the future. I used to live in Blaencwm....the area has some outstanding walks and scenery which as a family we took full advantage off.. When living there I always thought it was never promoted properly by the council....it was like living in a forgotten place. Loads of services have been taken away from that community.
RCT must play to its strengths, dynamic, countryside, mountains fresh and the weather
It would be brilliant to see this happen but sadly I do not feel there is sufficient infrastructure to support visitors
Let's be honest, people from elsewhere in the uk aren't really interested in coal tips and mining. Focus on the beauty, the great outdoors, the central location of Aberdare for Cardiff-Swansea Gower-Brecon, the people and cafe culture.
Lots of areas to visit but need the necessary infrastructure to make it appealing
RCT has a strong history and culture combined with beautiful landscape and modern attractions such as zip wire, biking etc
Using advantages such as our landscape in particular by creating new trails around the rct area will make the area more appealing, aswell as having activities such as zipworld although it may be more beneficial to have these activities in the lower areas as not as many people will be willing to travel all the way through the valley for zipworld

5

As a business and tourism lecturer at Neath college, a resident of Treorchy and working in a well established (40 years) business in Treorchy I am passionate about our heritage And fabulous sights, entertainment and heritage we can share to encourage use of our facilities, visitors to the area abs there t create employment and generate recenye for RCT and its businesses. A tied up approach has been needed for many years.

We have excellent facilities and landscapes that need highlighting but we also need to invest in our town centres to make those exciting and important too. We need to support small independent businesses. A recent trip/holiday to Cornwall, where I visited many towns, proved that supporting small and independent businesses helped create a thriving town. Towns were clean at all times, no anti-social behaviour and everything you needed (toilets, facilities etc) clearly signposted.

Zip wire, waterfalls, mountain walks - all within a few miles of aberdare

I think it would benefit the local economy

RCT has a lot to offer, it needs promoting. Consider the huge motorhome increase across the UK, make overnight parking accessible.

We have majestic mountains, wonderful waterfalls and spectacular scenery. All of it easily accessed from the main towns.

We love to visit when we can we are in the area touring in our motorcaravan, we just need more places to park up for the night so that we can stay longer

Beautiful countryside and his attractions but not well known outside the area

It needs to have a rich Welsh heritage

Rhondda-born & bred but lived in England for a decade. On returning to Rhondda & the former Taff-Ely area, I have been impressed by the history, scenery & diversity of this area. I'm always happy to share these attractions to friends & extended family from outside the county.

We visit for the locations and activities

Many visitors that enjoy experience based holidays, cycling, walking etc. want to stay in campsites and dedicated motorhome stopovers or 'Aires'. I didn't see anything about developing these facilities in your strategy.

I feel RCT should be classed as a Premier destination, but there are other areas that a boast similar level of experiences.

Premier might be aiming a tad high but certainly it's a great aim.

I agree and support the statement although know little about the region so it needs a profile boost.

The UK needs to be more tourist friendly, we have a motorhome and there are so many places we would visit, spend our money if there were accessible places to stay.

You have an amazing landscape and culture - but not many know of it

So much natural beauty within RCT and so many opportunities for ' things to do within and close to RCT

6

It's a beautiful area, but maybe not on a top 10 destination list for a lot of visitors such as The New Forest of Lake District.
Would love to visit in our van
People are drawn to new and exciting experiences and days out. For example beautiful scenery or wild swimming spots posted on Instagram attract many people to go out and experience this for themselves
Great to build on what's there, but please not by building eyesore 'experiences' in the middle of a beautiful location.
That would create a 'something for everyone' tourist experience, as well as boosting local employment opportunities.
Beautiful countryside, history and culture
I was born in RCT and have returned on many an occasion. I know that there is lots to do and see in the area and what wonderful scenery there is to be seen. Encouraging tourism is key to re-building local business especially now post-Covid.
RCT is an under-appreciated region full of lovely scenery and fascinating history, especially industrial history. It deserves to benefit from more tourism.
Quality leisure time site's are invaluable
South Wales and RCT have a lot to offer
Generally love Wales for tourism
I don't necessarily travel for "experience " but rather to get a flavour of an area before moving on in my Motorhome.
There is a lot of unused potential (e.g. lack of marked trails) in the hills surrounding the Rhondda and towns which are in need of refurbishments.
I live in neighbouring Borough - as locals we don't always appreciate or promote what's on our own doorstep and every visitor I've spoken to have been surprised at how much we have to offer in the area
You have to have variety to offer for most tastes. BEING INCLUSIVE OF ALL ABILITIES is also vital. Dn't exclude disabled people, the young or the very old
I also think it's important not to alienate less adventurous tourists who may enjoy simple walks through countryside and visits to beaches and those with children who may not have the money to spend on expensive "experiences". Every penny that is spent in RCT is a penny not spent elsewhere and precious to our economy.
Because that's what all tourism authorities should be striving to do.
Outdoor space
Because this will improve jobs in the area

7

We are blessed with an amazing landscape, and beautiful views, which are perfect for outdoor activities and sports. Also our heritage and culture has never been given the exposure it deserves. I have a few reservations tho, which are why I didn't choose 'strongly agree'; tourism reliant jobs are very low paid, and also I don't love the thought of our roads and natural places being taken over by cars and car parks. I would like some emphasis being out in the creative sectors also, I think RCT is the ideal place for creative industries to thrive and develope.
RCT has some excellent destination opportunities.
Wales has a lot to offer
There is much to offer - should concentrate more on landscape - we shouldn't be placing so much attention in our past. We need to look forward.
You need to make people aware of why they should visit!
I feel this is a suitably aspirational vision for RCT
I agree, but we need to recognise the immigration heritage and the non welsh language connections in the valleys. We need disabled led organisations to make this culture accessible to all - life experience led.
One of the greatest things in life is the ability to travel to see new places and people. Being positive about tourism can only enhance the experience of tourists.
As a motorhomer touring the UK we are very happy to visit areas offering a good range of attractions that are readily accessible.
You need to also have good quality accommodation on offer in RCT for visitors to stay. I think there's a distinct lack of such accommodation on offer. Who can you work with to provide such quality accommodation? What about supporting RCT local businesses to expand their offer to support your vision. Also when recently travelling from Mountain Ash to Neath on May Day Bank Holiday weekend, there was not a single sign to promote Zip World new attraction.
Its a stunning area can't wait to visit again lots to do
The Rhondda Valley is well know throughout the UK for its mining heritage.
Myself and other people like to keep busy outdoors when on holiday, walking and visiting attractions. U.K. weather isn't always the best so sitting on a beach is not really an option.
As I am living in Treherbert I know that the Rhondda has a lot to offer but infrastructure needs to be improved dramatically
We have beautiful landscapes and it's important for the world to see this.
It is a beautiful area to visit. Promoting the culture and heritage can only be a good thing.
This is a beautiful area with a diversity of interesting things to do and see. We like walking in beautiful countryside and this area is perfect for that

8

Night time motorhome parking hopefully available for self conatined vehicles Max 48 hrs lets visitors arrive stop over night then explore the full day and hopefully spend within your area, eating and maybe a drink then move on next morning.
Could be the go to place in wales for thrill seekers
Everyone avoids RCT. Its a shame
Business is not bringing jibes to the area, as a result the natural beauty is enhanced. Plenty of work force available to make full use of what is here already.
I wouldn't say it's a premier destination , people will be expecting too much! It could also do with a popular sign or attraction like Vegas or Hollywood welcoming people to this part of the world and knowing where they are. More child/ whole family attractions are also urgently required in the area with updated facilities having busted other areas of the UK and the Worldp
It will boost jobs and highlight how beautiful our scenery and landscape is.
i am ambivalent about the benefits of introducing tourism as it pushes up house prices and soon the local people can't afford decent housing.
Soundds good, nut I think more provision for motorhomes need to be made, with a significant spend potential that the bring
Because our landscape lends itself to this.
This area has so much social history, combined with natural beauty that it is a great place to visit.
RCT has huge potential but there are some things that let it down badly
RCT is a gorgeous part of the world and can offer a great deal. Investment in the local infrastructure needs to be made to match this vision.
Have a look at Dare Valley Country Park , what an utter mess , no actual investment where it is needed . It's falling down through neglect
RCT Has natural landscapes that need to be explored and expanded
Landscape, peace and quiet, walking are my priorities rather than culture
EXCELLENT WALKING COUNTRY
ERDF has gone, and there will be an annual shortfall of £680m from Westminster.
RCT shouldn't be working alone, the Rhondda Cynon & Taff valleys share a common regional history with the South East Wales valleys region and to focus on RCT at the exclusion of other counties limits the scope of what is possible and weakens the offer to visitor's. The taff valkey alone passes through four counties, historical rail lines and tunnels have the potential to connect valleys in neighbouring counties broading the scope for the visitor experience. Our first class landscape, culture and heritage are regional and can only be shown at their best through a regional strategy.
The Legacy of heavy industry may have gone but the history and social impact should not be forgotten and should be promoted and celebrated.
We have a very specific culture to share as well as sights to see. You can only get that from immersive experience type attractions.

9

RCT definitely needs promoting a lot more as new businesses are opening and being developed in our beautiful valleys.
Agree with the sentiment of the statement but "the premier destination" in the U.K. is a ludicrous aspiration and statement to make
Although I want to encourage economic activity in the area, I am concerned that this will lead to local people ability to reside in the area as house prices sores. Many young people are not able to buy property as houses are already being bought up for accommodation and holiday let's
Where we live is so beautiful loads lovely scenery and walks
We have a lot to offer that people don't really think of.
I fully believe that tourism for the Rhondda valley's needs to thoroughly invested in. I see it as a way out of poverty and also a way to enhance a strong sense of pride and and love for the beautiful landscape and culture. We in wales have been slow in tapping into this golden opportunity however it is vital that we also take advantage and showcase what is on offer without relying on sunny weather we have a fantastic and diverse weather system that we all need to learn to show off to the world. Wales is open 24/7 and the rain should not stop play or opportunities.
There are so many places of historical interest in RCT and stunning scenery with plenty of outdoor spaces
It doesn't state the Welsh Language or its promotion. It's an asset to be shared with visitors to communicate culture and heritage.
Anything that is done to put us "back on the map" must be encouraged & tourism is something we must promote after the loss of our manufacturing & industrial sources of revenue
Potential to grown tourism.
Some parts of RCT need upgrading. More parking is necessary especially in town centres & more shops. (Not charity, phone or beauty shops)
I think this vision is a long way off and is very optimistic.
RCT has a rich heritage of the past, present and future with our attractions - this needs to be harnessed and exploited to bring people to RCT - putting money into our economy and supporting local jobs
we have plenty to offer in terms of hospitality, culture, heritage and beauty spots
Many coming to Wales think of Snowdonia, Brecon Beacons or seaside towns. RCT region needs to be promoted more to encourage visitors to the area.
Inadequate car parking. Inadequate places with protection from the elements. Inadequate policing of drug addiction, drunks and anti social behaviour.

10

What does the term 'premier destination' actually mean? I agree that there is a first class landscape in parts of ~RCT and that more people should be encouraged to visit. It has a heritage and history that should also be the basis for economic benefits and tourism. I'm also not sure what 'experience based visits' are. Perhaps there is a better chance of achieving a realistic tourism strategy without the jargon!
I think more should be done for shopping centres to attract people who want a whole holiday experience.
I'm happy in a way to keep RCT as a hidden gem.
We need to attract tourists but not to out price the local population as has happened in other parts of Wales.
RCT has wonderful opportunities for outdoor activities and benefits from being within easy reach of the capital, there is an opportunity to draw people out from the city to experience this and play on the area's USP. The new Zipworld attraction is also going to put far more eyes on the area and will attract those whose interests align with the vision outlined above.
"Premier" means nothing in actual terms anyone can measure. Replace with "most visited" and measure it to see if the strategy has been delivered in 12/24 months I'm concerned RCT will spend lots of money on this with zero focus/ measurement of RoI
The area has many attractions
I'm not originally from the area but always boast about its natural beauty to those who are not familiar with it.
Un o brif yn fwy realistig. Dylid bod yn gweithio i greu Cymru yn brif gyrchfan.
Our landscape offers a stunning backdrop for visitors and residents and I think the vision is correct for what our address can offer, it is certainly ambitious to want to establish the area as the premier destination for this as a lot of work and infrastructure as well as investment in the local area will need to be done to achieve this.
It's a lofty goal , obviously this would benefit RCT.
As long as existing attractions/would-be attractions are given the same amount of time, thought and investment as new attractions AND that there is a joined-up thinking approach to existing community leaders, anchor organisations/hubs, businesses/organisations who have been hit hard by Covid that could potentially become an 'attraction' or use their skills/experience to develop attractions - whether with or without any assets they may have. Take a lead in community wealth building!
The beauty of the Valleys cannot be surpassed
Not sure we can be the 'premier destination' but we can certainly be a strong contender
While visions almost-always state they will be the best / offer the best, or the premier, this is often not do-able, and is recognised by people reading the blurb that this is not possible. hence, some cynicism can result. Perhaps "extablish RCT as a top ranking destination" ....

11

I have lived here all my life would not live anywhere else beautiful landscapes loads of walking waterfalls
There is already a lot of active experiences in the area - mountain biking, cycling, zip wire, distillery egg - perfect to build upon
Dare Valley Country Park is an eyesore , deprived of investment for years and still is . Long paid jobs , seasonal , how on earth do you expect poverty to be tackled .
The RCT should be showcasing what is on offer, including the history of the region.
Increase job opportunities
To bring income into a relatively deprived area of Wales.
Seems a step to far to have rct as 'premier' destination.. By this it implies number 1?! Is this correct? If so...pretty unlikely.
We are the heart of history, an just a step away from Cardiff.
Beautiful country side,forests walking opportunities. I feel the potential of what we have is not being used as it could.
I believe RCT has the potential to attract more tourists/become a premier destination but currently lacks the infrastructure
Tourist
RCT has a natural landscape & an industrial heritage to be proud of. It is also blessed with musicians, artists, actors, writers & athletes.
We need to get people to spend time in the area to spend money which will create jobs.
Promote & Build our tourist industry then maybe people and councils will take more pride in ascetics in they're areas. As while tourists travel to these spots some of the areas they go through are eye sores.
I have put 'agree' instead of 'strongly agree' simply because I don't think we should be limited in showcasing what we have. However, the landscape, culture, and heritage is definitely the best place to start.
Any employment benefits will be lower skilled , low pay and will create very little jobs , they will be seasonal . What is required is respectful investment for the residents
I agree with the statement but we should be going further and wider. A green landscape and innovative modern approach. (Nearmenow) Welcome to our Woods. etc.
Premier destination may be a bit ambitious. It would be good to actually be a destination! Every little helps.
e have stunning natural beauty which has been reclaimed from past industry. We here in the northern part of Cynon now enjoy the beauties of the natural landscape which for so many years was despoiled by mining. Any future strategy whilst acknowledging our industrial history needs to be very mindful of our enviromental future.

12

Mae'r hen diwydiannau ar ben ac mae angen datblygu gweledigaeth newydd ar gyfer y Cymoedd, a chynnig cyfleoedd am swyddi amrywiol i'n pobl ifanc. Mae ein hardal yn ganolig i pobl sydd eisiau cerdded, beicio ayyb ac mae'r zipline yn flas o'r hyn gall cael ei datblygu gydag ychydig o weledigaeth a buddsoddiad.
Time to move on from the dirty industries of our past.
just want enjoy countryside/people/food
We do have some beautiful landscapes to show, however we are lacking in some general activities/places to stay. Also wheelchair accessibility is poor!! I am particularly angry and the new structures at the Clydach Vale lakes (top and bottom lakes) - metal walkway structures have been put in place yet they render wheelchair access obsolete! I am not a wheelchair user but feel appalled that wheelchair users can now not access the lakes. I've witnessed local wheelchair/mobility scooter users be unable to enter due to these metal walkways. I feel ashamed we have done this to our local residents and would not want the rest of the world to witness what we as RCT have done to local people with mobility issues!! Disgraceful! And appalling to see wheelchair users be physically unable to access the lakes due to these structures! Very very appalling behaviour by the council.. it's an absolute shame to see the disappointment in the faces of local people.

Please tell us why (extent of agreement that RCT's 'landscape', 'culture' and 'heritage' are our key strengths when looking to develop and drive forward a tourism offer?)

Beautiful walks and wildlife should be promoted
landscape provides suitable structure for simple walks or more difficult terraines.
Yes, but we need more suitable accommodation for visitors if you want them to stay.
We have the Beacons, Cardiff and beaches not more that 30mins drive from valley locations. Strong historical heritage.

13

I don't like all these so-called adrenaline junkie activities. I think the zipwire looks ugly , a blight on the landscape. I don't think RCT is a place people want to visit in all honesty. Maybe they would pass through on the way to Cardiff or the coast or Mid Wales. With all due respect for our proud, historic area, it's not an attractive place. There is nowhere nice to stay. Our people are warm and friendly but - and I know this will upset some- there're quite a few insular people in the Valleys with quite "old-fashioned" views. A little bit behind the times cuturally too. These are my people, but it's the truth. Where on earth would people stay on RCT? Very few really nice places to eat/drink. A bit backward. Sorry. It's true. The valleys are always behind the times. Things many people say and attitudes are a little bit cringe-making sometimes. My family are from RCT so I know of what I speak. And I've worked here listening to embarrassing twp views from colleagues.

We have a world renowned heritage and now that our lanscapes are greening once again and more emphasis has been placed on the environment and ecology this is a huge attraction we have never realy been able to harness in the past.

Our landscape is beautiful, accessible and free. Our culture is rooted in centuries of Welsh history which is not widely known about or publicised. Our heritage is interesting and apart from coal mines is also not widely known about or publicised. It would benefit residents who would become more well informed about our area as well as drive forward a tourism offer.

We got to sell RCT to people

Environmental and historic richness

Great natural beauty of the mountains rivers and waterfalls, would be great to open up the reservoir and lakes to open water swimming events or paddle boarding, or sailing clubs, we have lots of industrial revolution heritage sights, push the author Cordel connection. Ballooning would be a great way to see the area, Bristol have this type of attraction.

The heritage is here , the landscape is here , the parking is not and high streets full of empty and boarded up shops will not help.Why not make Porth a heritage town instead of Charity shops and Takeaways and prioritise parking.There are bus loads of tourists just going to the heritage park.I was born here but have lived/worked in England and if I came to the Heritage Park then drove to Hanna Street in Porth I would turn around and not come back.

I think out main strength is the landscape and how easy this is to access for lots of different things

the landscape somthing to be seen

Yes they are, you have a gold course on top of a mountain, waterfalls, unlimited walks, mountain biking tracks that link to many places, heritage park, zip wire, roller coaster and a potential bike/ walk tunnel (I visit the https://www.visitpeakdistrict.com/things-to-do/monsal-trail-cycle-hire-p683511 this a lot-again millions of bikers each year and bike hire centres) - shopping centres that could thrive with tourism. WHAT IS NOT TO LIKE.

We need to take the opportunities our landscape gives us and embrace it.

14

Other than the lido I'm not sure what else is accessible in rct via public transport
Beautiful surroundings
As above, there are many opportunities to understand welsh heritage and culture along with nature and walks
The Valleys lanscape is stunning and there is a rich tradition of culture and the arts as well as historic signficance
This can help strengthen the image of the area for new visitors
You haven't kept the lidos heritage you've made it in a children's play pool!
The three strengths work together and create an interesting offer
Could hardly say poor housing and low incomes as key strengths
Need to do more with our industrial heritage - trails, history, landmarks etc
No understanding of heritage at the park
The landscape is for me the biggest draw.
Culture and heritage are often overlooked
It is in places a stunning landscape unfortunately mixed with some abysmal areas in particular the high levels of flytipping in many of the rivers and upland areas (this is also true of your neighbouring authorities and until it is sorted it makes the adventure tourism package weak)
Your lido is worth shouting about !
There are beautiful parts and fascinating sites
Because I believe there are still people who think there 'isn't much here' !
It's beautiful
tap into the strong heritage
We are steeped in interesting history and culture
The landscape is the main draw. With the easily accessible mountains, hills, paths, bike routes, waterfalls etc.
What the hell is that library you built just over the bridge. Looks dreadful
Its no just coal. Talk about our mountains our waking routes our happy communities, local cafe culture. Start investing in our high streets and what we have not just bringing in top names
Lots of industrial heritage
There are areas that are run down, dated and need investment
They are what we are proud of and can offer this to all
What else is there?
These are unlimited "resources " by which to base a future economy. They are unique and worthy of being proud of and of interest to others.
There really isn't much else of interest in RCT.
Landscape is scarred by coal tips and wind farms. Heritage is based on mining and only seems valuable to an ever ageing population of residents. Why would I travel to see a coal tip or mine?
Because the scenery here is so beautiful,
It is, just not been emphasised enough.
See answer above

15

I moved to the area so I am not familiar with the history so only know what I have experienced. I don't know rct well as only starting exploring since ponty lido started up.
More and more people are concerned about the environment and are more interested in local heritage.
What elements of these three things are you enhancing and why? How is mining the landscape a good thing? What is positive you can draw out of it? Isn't mining the landscape the opposite of preserving it? Some areas of RCT don't seem to have green or tidy planting in some areas or to have preserved any traditional urban layout. Pontypridd has a huge road running around and through it.
I completely agree with this. We do have a beautiful landscape, although certain areas could do with a clean up, and an interesting heritage and culture. We should definitely take advantage of this.
I quote Michael Sheen " this is the best scenery I have seen in the world!"
With projects like the Rhondda Tunnel and the Zip Wire, we can be world leaders
Little Switzerland as Richard Burton once said...
The heritage we have can be used as a selling point and should be used to its fullest advantage. Pontypridd being the gateway to the valleys needs considerable ongoing development with more shops and hotels and restaurants. It's in an awful state at the moment
As above
The landscape is beautiful but can still be somewhat blighted (old tips, old industry that hasn't been « tidied up » yet). Heritage is a big thing and the local history is very important - industrial revolution, mining, working class history, the miner's strikes.
RCT has so much mining heritage and amazing scenery that could be promoted.
a above
There is so much here that would attract people
Don't focus on the past. Heritage is only important to local school kids.
Because our heritage and culture are strong and unique.   We have a strong culture which includes the writers of our national anthem and Cwm Rhondda.
Rct is a lovely land full of gorgeous landscapes i personally like to visit however i feel that the recent deforestation particularly in the Rhondda is ruining this as mountains look better from below with trees
We have a fascinating heritage and incredible industrial history that needs to be shared. Other countries "dine out" on much less. I am sure that many of our residents are unaware of the enormous impact of our mining heritage, the important part we played, she enormity off the industry, where the mines were situated. Let's offer tours to school children and to visitors on these.
We have an impressive heritage, landscape and history but I feel a lot is lost or overlooked with new developments taking priority

16

As above but work is needed on signposting tourists to them - design a 'package' of what can be done/seen in a 5-10 mile radius
I think we have some beautiful landscapes and an interesting heritage history
There are some good tourism highlights that focus on culture and heritage. They need promoting.
There's so much to see and learn about the area and it's historical heritage and culture.
An area rich in heritage and history
It's important to know our history & discover the biodiversity which lies within the borough. Culture is an entertaining medium for celebrating our history, language & lyricism.
The beauty of the Welsh valleys, the proud industrial history, the rugby - the area has so much to offer that is unique
If affordable stopover provision is not available to Motorcaravan tourists they will take their holidays elsewhere where they feel more welcome and where local authorities are encouraging Motorcaravan tourism
The area has been transformed over time. It's natural landscape, scarred by industry has been transformed, to be restored to its natural state, but paying homage to its industrial past.
My family are from RCT and I love visiting the area. It has much family history for me and the landscape has changed significantly in my lifetime.
As above I know so little about the region that I can't comment. I would live to get to know the region's intricacies in our motorhome.
RCT are forward thinking
Because it's true - coastal and mountains
Beautiful landscapes and amazing heritage
Like everywhere in the UK history is in every step, sight etc, the Rhonnda Valley landscape is varied & beautiful.
During lockdown and having to stay local I have found so many additional places of beauty in the landscape that I didn't know about before. Past culture of mining especially is very interesting to me and I have always loved going for a day out to learn more, I have taken friends from around the world including Australia to visit and learn about welsh history.
It's what interests me and it's already there, just needs promotion.
As above
See 2.
Heritage once lost is never regained
RCT has its own unique heritage
Full of history, always something interesting to find
The landscape has changed somewhat since the 'black' days of the pits (for the better!), but the culture and heritage stay strong and are well worth emphasising.
If you cannot celebrate the past how can you look to the future and progress.
If you've got it flaunt it!
Beautiful countryside

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Because we have such a variety of beautiful areas an this need to be showcased
Our history and culture are something to be proud of and we need to stop mocking ourselves and putting ourselves down.
As previous answer
These are the key stones of any tourist attraction.
RCT has all 3 categories in abundance, although awareness across the rest of the UK and Europe is very low. Other Celtic nations, particularly Scotland and Ireland have established both national and regional identities based on these 3 categories, which are recognisable worldwide but Wales and RCT have so much to offer but are often overlooked for tourism.
I agree, but we need to recognise the immigration heritage and the non welsh language connections in the valleys. We need disabled led organisations to make this culture accessible to all - life experience led.
The one in the middle is the opt out choice . You count either side of the middle line, doesn't matter whether you tick agree or strongly agree
The region has some outstanding countryside and lots of experiences to encourage tourism.
They offer considerable attraction for visitors from outside the region.
The area has the foundation to build on I agree. However, you need to step up and promote what's on offer, poor signage throughout RCT is an issue. Some RCT residents don't know what's on offer such as the new Zip World. This is a major attraction in North Wales, drawing numerous visitors to the area. RCT could do the same but please step up on a range of accommodation options, signage and publicity.
Landscape is stunning
Same as point above
The landscape is beautiful but all the major walking routes need overhauling and clearly mapping out
Young people don't go to other parts of the country to see hills and trees. They want experiences, things to do, places to go, experiences they can't have elsewhere.
Landscape comes top of the list for me - culture and heritage go hand in hand with it.
Night time motorhome parking hopefully available for self conatined vehicles Max 48 hrs lets visitors arrive stop over night then explore the full day and hopefully spend within your area, eating and maybe a drink then move on next morning.
More attractions needed.
Could be better developed and more attractive! Not fully utilising the scope that RCT has to offer to the max
I think there are also key phrases we could use, like focusing on our: diversity, nature, history
Our heritage is extremely important as The Rhondda Valley is well known in many parts of the world. Our landscape is also quite breathtaking.

18

Our countryside is stunning and awe inspiring. But our people litter and don't value where we live. This needs to change and there needs to be a stronger litter picking workforce. In addition, a clean up needs to be started to get rid of the kitchens, door and general waste that is dumped over garden walls, towards rivers and off the mountains which turns out awesome countryside into an eyesore. Whilst I am a member of a voluntary litter picking group, we can't keep up with the rate it's being thrown and can't do anything at all about larger items dumped.

Because of the untapped potential. Let's get the middle Cynon area on par and up level to the more affluent areas. Create a mid Cynon park like Aberdare park, at the abercwmboi lakes. It has lots of wildlife, it flat and open and could benefit the local well being and encourage tourism. Through fishing, sight seeing, possible hospitality too. This could be linked to the Cynon trial. There could be employment opportunity as well as raising the prosperity and feel good factor of living in the mid and lower valley. Ets level up. Make it fair, that even the poorest can have access to open park land like those in Aberdare, cwmdare etc.

People think of the Rhondda as being full of coal tips and smoking chimneys. Now that the landscape has been transformed, there is so much of interest her.

RCT is loaded with each of these

Cutting down all of the trees , digging up fields . Destroying the ecology , environment

I agree that RCT landscapes can be a huge asset to the develop mat of tourism.

BEAUTIFUL COUNTRYSIDE AND VERY EASY ACCESS

We have so many diverse attractions for tourism.

It very much depends on how you are defining and marketing 'culture'. The people of RCT, and the many excellent businesses and community projects that they run are one of the areas greatest assets. Thd landscape around Treherbert for example, is visually stunning, but its the community there that make it a more interesting and unique place to visit. Work with and support each community to flourish and engage with it's surrounding landscape and you give more people reasons to visit.

A lot of our friends from London enjoy the landscape here

We have beautiful landscapes and scenery and this should be developed alongside the historical events linked to them

Welsh working class identity needs to be explored more and go beyond the mines.

Promoting the landscape I agree with but we are always known as an poor ex coal mining area. We need to promote new things not dwell in the past.

Landscape, culture and heritage are our USPS and best attraction and offer for tourists

Local residence also need to be involved in the vision for they're area.

...just a shame you've spoilt it with all the wind turbines

19

We got lot to offer for tourism but more can be done .
Our landscape is beautiful and we have a strong history or heritage. I think maybe the culture needs a bit of work due to years of RCT being promoted by various governments as being a deprived area.
We are in danger of losing so many of our wonderful buildings and landscapes that we should be caring for after all it's our heritage thats at stake
See Q2 we have the Museums in Trehafod and Pontypridd, the Rocking Stones up Pontypridd Common. The many mountains we have in RCT have amazing scenery and ideal walking trails. Our theatres are full of character and heritage.
I agree the landscape is a great incentive for tourists however at present I don't feel there is alot on offer for families. Parking alone in aberdare for families is difficult, the only place in aberdare with parent and child parking is dare valley country park and there are only 5 spaces available there. I believe things similar to the gruffalo trail could be incorporated somewhere in RCT.
Heritage is industrial English colonialism in Rhondda. It can offer more that.
We often don't appreciate the history & beauty on our doorstep which should be used to their full potential
Strong heritage and history.
Better places to visit than RCT
Landscape is the main selling point
Very much so, all three valley's have different activities and destinations to offer tourists - all within a short distance of each other, something for all the family.
see previous answer
Much to offer that has been overlooked by many tourists.
Stunning landscapes
This is what makes our communities so should be celebrated and promoted.
We are located in a lovely spot in Wales.
Outstanding landscape and heritage
Outdoor activities are growing in popularity and the benefits of being outdoors are being increasingly recognized. The appetite for the 'outdoor lifestyle' coupled with the rise in staycations and outdoor events as a result of pandemic restrictions make it a good time to capitalize on the natural landscape of the area and what this can offer visitors. Focusing on the culture and heritage of the locality also offers a way to set the area apart from other areas with scenic landscapes, showing that the area has more to offer .
People could be a 4th?
It's our heritage
I agree but infrastructure is just as important.
Ond dylid rhoi mwy o bwyslais yn y cynllun ein hun ar ddiwylliant a threftadaeth a iaith hefyd. Does dim cyfeiriad at y ffaith bod ein anthem genedlaethol o'r ardal. Colli cyfle aruthrol.

20

Our landscape, culture and heritage are unique, there's nowhere in the world like the Rhondda!
Not sure about culture. Youths drunking in the parks every weekend is hardly tourism friendly. But landscape is amazing and there should be tours available from Ton Pentre to penderyn and Brecon.
Again, if you work with existing businesses/organisations, community leaders, anchor organisations/hubs and businesses/organisations who have been hit hard by Covid that could potentially 'pivot' to become/develop into an attraction/point of interest/tour/guide etc. Tapping into these existing resources and experience that people have means that you're aiding community wealth building.
They are the area's strengths - we can't offer great towns, we need to develop more tourism support sector businesses
They cover the main features of the local environment.
As above
It's all there but people want a bit more than to just passively appreciate - activity is the key to engagement
There is no heritage in the Cynon Valley . It's either been knocked down or left to rot
People come to any region, on holiday for various reasons. ie The scenery, family connection (Ancestry researching),
Network of rivers requiring investment, opportunities to open miles of walks linking between towns and villages. With food/cafes/pubs and recreation such as bike routes (taff trail as example) Investment to clean riverbanks of plastic waste /rubbish, improve regional biodiversity and repair flood defences to protect business and residents.
Play to RCT's strengths and resources.
So much history with so much to offer. Activities outdoors need to be used by tourists.
RCT offers beautiful viewpoints, and a rich history with many locations at the pinnacle of British industrial history
Unique
RCT's landscape is accessible & available year-round. Our cultural offer can be found in live performances & street murals. Our heritage shows our links with the world beyond our county boundaries - industrial, social & cultural.
Beautiful landscapes such as Pen Pych, Trehafod park (especially with the current bike trails for adventure tourism), Llantrisant Common, Dare Valley, etc... Culture and heritage from the Industrial Revolution.
Anything Cultural and Historical has been knocked down in the Cynon Valley by a Labour Party over decades

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I feel there is a lot more to gain other than the thing we have been doing already for 30 years. Heritage? We have bulldozed 99% of our heritage. The old pump house in Tonypandy is proof in point. Incredibly important building as it is all that is left and its a waste land. you've had decades to address this and failed. So move away from this approach and show the new environments that have established since. Climate action is important to show.
Some of the best walking country in south Wales. Shame about all the wind turbines.
Our landscape, culture and heritage define who we are as a people. However, we need to build on this as a tourist destination with modern attractions that are not at odds with nature and the environment.
Mae pwysleisio iaith, traddodiad a diwylliant Cymreig yn ein gwneud yn unigryw ac yn arbennig. Dyma'r hyn sydd angen ei hysbysebu i'r byd er mwyn denu pobl yma. Rhaid marchnata'r hyn sydd gyda ni. Edrychwch ar sut mae'r Alban e.e yn hysbysebu popeth y galle nhw er mwyn denu tiwristiaid. Rhaid i ni manteisio ar bob cyfle.
Our landscape certainly is outstanding. Our culture is lacking (see wheelchair access above). Communities look out for each other to an extent, but the council seem to be narrow sighted

Key Themes - Are there any others you feel should be considered?

Advertising
Wellbeing and mindfulness experience
To work with local businesses to see what they can offer and keeping them informed Also advertising campaign outside of area would be key
No
Make people appear less twp?
Enhancing town centres. People will go to a "pretty" high street and in these days of social media, you need places which photograph well (eg Instagram worthy images) - eg, shops with co-ordinating awnings, Victorian lamps, outdoor/pavement seating, independent shops selling local items.
No i think others will develop once we have started on the road to achieving these and further developing our offer.
The natural world - wildlife, flora and fauna alike.
We got to sell RCT to people
Environment natural features

22

Promote Big events to draw people into the area who may then come back in the future, cycling or running events, live comedy or music festivals. We need a Greenman or Food festival like Abergavenny, Real ale Octoberfest idea. Look to west wales for ideas, Folly farm, Bluestone, Heatherton, Play based fun things for families, need a Thorp Park style themepark, upgrade Monkey world!
Pontypridd will slowly die like Porth has unless the problems due to Half way house and Probation services there , spend an hour in Mill street and see what I mean.Would I recommend staying in the Rhondda to friends , no , I would recommend Neath Valley.
Where does hospitality fit in this - lots of good pubs and restaurants as well as cafe's
these should be considered as they are important plus you you need road sign which are not warn out if road signs are warn out the they should be replased vistors wont beable to find anything
YOU SAY -Infrastructure to serve the needs of visitors should be developed - you also need to maintain the bridleways as a lot of them are not -look at the land behind Pentre comp - amazing walks but not maintained - there needs to be huge investment in the front facing valley roads as some of it looks bleak-again look at Pentre - St Peters church could also be a tourist attraction and bring Pentre back to life ! The litter in most places is also appalling and if I was on holiday, it would put me off coming again. The litter along the river line is terrible - what a walk that could be if it didn't have so much litter and plastic. The bridges are also not maintained - they are water logged, full of litter and moss and flood on occasion. I litter pick and the rubbish is relentless. The dog poo is also bad. There needs to be campaigns in schools, education programmes across the Rhondda about these issues (if not done already) - so yes this needs to be added to that point
Environmental impact. We need keep all these things sustainable for future generations. Coal mining should have fought us that.
No
Welsh Language Respecting local community wishes and ways of life must also be respected
Environment
Transportation
No, this covers the highest priority themed
Accommodation is sadly lacking, infrastructure awful.
Think there should be reference to the natural environment and/or sustainability
Family history so connect to ex pats, those looking to find their heritage
Get some girls on the desk at the lido with manners and understanding . We got horribly lost and no sympathy for my 8 year old who had 3 minutes in the pool .
Attractions are very important

23

Events
Sorting flytipping and antisocial use of motor vehicles in the hills
Transport and parking
More hotels need to bring people in
No
Beautiful walks but I suppose that comes under Attractions
Hospitality e.g pubs and restaurants
Parking
Ensuring that it is eco friendly and sustainable
No
Sustainability with a focus on reducing the impact on the environment of encouraging mass tourism
Environmental/ Green
Accessibility needs to be number 1 on your list of priorities
Signposting Walking routes and signage natural beauty community pride not poverty attitude
No
Improve visual impact of town centres
Health and wellbeing
Evolution of South Wales into 21st century.
Marketing especially Internationally Agriculture
Environment and conservation
Improving the degradation of the whole area. People are not going to want to travel through really rough areas the get to an attraction.
Sustainability
Engagement
The surrounding facilities,
1. Need more caravan and motorhome parks! 2. More cycle routes for all abilities to connect and link up with the new tourism attractions. Plus we need more all ability trails around our forests and Woodlands for every one to enjoy. I am surrounded by beauty where I live in Rhigos, but as disabled lady using a trike or mobility scooter I cant access it :-(
Better shopping centre more big name stores
We need to ensure that our roads, signage, parks, are all maintained to a high standard. Wheelie bins on the road as you enter the country park do not create a good impression. Dirty, damaged road signs are not good.
Sustainability should be number one - promoting active travel, cycle parking at every attraction and disincentive to car driving
No.
Food and drink venues. Consider somewhere that offers afternoon tea.
Community. Engaging more with local communities to encourage better collaboration that will in-turn produce better outcomes.

24

Yes, street design, architecture and improving boundary treatments (urban design) and materials, sustainable drainage, water quality and greening, walking and safe streetscape to improve the visitor experience between destinations.
There are no other themes I could suggest. All of the ones that have been selected are appropriate.
Heritage Leisure
More Accommodation
Transport and accessibility.....
The heritage of the canal and common in Pontypridd   environment heritage preservation and development
Cultural organisations, specifically musical - Rhondda's choirs and brass bands are world famous. These should be both celebrated and showcased
Ecology. Rewilding and reforesting could add to the attractions of the landscape. ALSO - I RECENTLY CYCLED THROUGH TAFF'S WELL AND SAW THE TOURIST BOARD ABOUT THE THERMAL SPRING - PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE REDEVELOP IT AS A PROPER THERMAL SPA - IT WOULD BE AMAZING! THE ONLY ONE IN WALES! (SORRY FOR CAPS BUT I COULDN'T BELIEVE THERE WAS SUCH AN ASSET HIDDEN AWAY)
Heritage
Food is an important part of the visitor experience and there is a lack of appealing places to eat near many really beautiful outdoor areas
A string balance of all is necessary but skills (training) are really key
No
Encourage colour and energy to the terraced streets, Cornwall and Tenby are fantastic at this. Lots of past "envelope" schemes have used brown drab colours. Have a drive through Abercwmboi or Treherbert. So depressing. Would be so much of an attraction if the houses were Yellow, Blue, Pink Red etc.
No
Community and people
Wildlife/countryside maintenance, to ensure a variety in biodiversity and nature biomes
Engagement of the community and businesses... all stakeholders. Have a joined up promotional approach where local businesses are aware of what is being promoted too ... it needs to start from grass roots level.
Cleanliness. I think hygiene in all areas needs to be thoroughly thought out.
Food and drink
arts and music which would probably come under Products and Attractions ? also Experience ?

25

Campra. The campaign for real aires. Areas for use the motorhome tourists. Use of car parks for overnight stays. If facilities were provided ie. Drinking water, Elsan/chemical toilet disposal point, a charge for overnighting. So many tourist attraction car parks won't be used overnight, perhaps offer parking from 1800 to 0900. Encourage tourists not discourage.

Overnight Aires for self contained motorhome in car parks

Hi, We would love to visit your area in our small unobtrusive self contained motorhome. This is throughout the year not just in the July and August peak season. We can't seem to find anywhere to park it though. Campsites are prohibitively expensive, don't offer short stays, suffer antisocial behaviour, are too far to walk from and are closed out of season. We just need a 6x3m rectangle, ideally water tap and toilet dump (hole in the ground will do) anywhere nearby but this could be 5 miles away. They have these facilities all over Europe and beyond. Remember that motorhomes have small fridges so we eat out and like to shop locally in independent outlets frequently. We are happy to clean up any litter around us that others have left. Free or cheap parking areas bring revenue and social contact to areas hit hard by the pandemic. Let us help! Regards, Peter Lewis, Dr Anne Carson Northern Ireland

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Accommodation should include the opportunity for visitors using self contained motorhomes to stay overnight in venues, spaces and car parks without the need to use up valuable space on campsites that are going to be much in demand. Self contained means that motorhomes have cooking, washing and toilet facilities on board and therefore do not need to use campsites on a daily basis. Provision of waste disposal sites for "grey" and "black" waste should be a high priority. This means they can use other spaces to park up for up to 3 nights at a time. People given this type of accommodation facility will likely spend more in the locality.

You need to embrace the rapidly expanding motorcaravan tourism in the UK. Following Brexit and Covid more that UK's 386'000 motorcaravans are looking to stay in the UK and e do not have facilities in place. The test of Europe as an infrastructure designed to cap this revenue stream worth over £1billion . And motorcaravans tour all year round not just a short season.

Accommodation should include French 'Aire' type overnight stops near to attractions for self contained motorhomes and campervans. This huge tourist sector travel all year round not just in the high season, tend to be affluent and willing to spend in the local area if suitable overnight parking is provided close to attractions as often they have no other means of transport. Camp sites are often geared towards caravanners who have cars with them and are not suitable for this sector

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Food

Train networkis key, also enhance the cycle networks in the borough

The environment - we were afflicted by Storm Dennis in 2020 but hill-fires & fly-tipping blight our landscape.
Environment
Motorhome tourism. There are over 400,000 UK registered motorhomes who travel all year round and just want the opportunity to be able to spend money in your communities and businesses. Without proper provision for them, they are unable to do this. Campsites aren't always suitable - long way from town, no other transport, closed all winter. We need overnight parking facilities, fresh water and waste disposal facilities. Not campsites, just parking.
Environmental issues
Within Accessibility, Infrastructure and Connectivity there should be plans to accommodate the growing number of Motorcaravan tourists that would visit if provision is made for daytime parking, overnight parking and service points with facilities for waste disposal and fresh water. There are now over 380,000 Motorcaravans registered in the UK and once travel restrictions have listed Motorcaravan tourists from Europe will return to areas known to provide the facilities required.
Respect for the natural surroundings and impact on climate change.
The accommodation sector needs ample provision for self contained motorhomes and campervans that desire more than campsites. Aires that provide us with a choice of setting and facilities will be imperative to our 380,000 strong population.
Promotion of all the above
Accommodation for motorhomes
Facilities, including stop overs and parking to accommodate Motorhomes at your attractions, towns, coastal
No
Under accommodation include public overnight parking for self contained Motorhome's
Conservation
Taking into account motorhome visitors
Setting up of overnight stops for motor homes also known as ' aires'
Give considered thought & accommodation to Camper-van/Motorhome traffic & visitors. Their needs are different to caravans. A lot of us like to 'stopover' in walking distance of amenities not stay on campsites that can be in remoter/rural locations. Also need parking in towns with bays long/wide enough...& no height barriers. Signs should help guide us to suitable car parks. Park & rides are great! These could also be overnight parkings.
Advertising and showing people what is out there
No comment

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Facilities for motorhomes should be considered under accommodation, considering the numbers now in the UK (over 380,000) and the staycation trend.

No.

Access for self contained motorhomes near towns in car parks If you allow overnight parking for a small charge, it will bring in extra income all year round to car park owner, plus the extra spend in local shops

Facilities for motorhomes and camper and near to town centres. These tourists can provide a year round source of income for businesses and tend to prefer more central parking due to the fact that they are much less manoeuvrable then the cars which tow caravans. Hence remote campsites are much less suitable for their needs.

As a camper van owner, provision of parking and overnighting is paramount to the motorhoming community. We spend an average of £50 pp in the local community just by stopping in an area. May I also bring your attention to CAMprA - a group which encourages local businesses & councils to provide an overnight stop (an Aire) for this type of visitor who do not require a camp site but just a place to sleep and thus bringing in extra revenue.

Motorhome overnight parking areas

The warmth of the Welsh welcome.

None come to mind

More diverse types of accommodation are needed, I would like to see a dedicated motor home park/aire,please have a look at the Campaign for Real Aires CAMpRA website loads of useful information on there.

Motorhome aires would be of great interest to us

Suitable overnight parking for people who visit the area whilst touring in campervans/ motorhomes.

Under'Accommodation', please bear in mind the needs of the Motorhomer, which does not mean campsites. What we need is suitable places to park during the day (so that we can spend time and money in towns and attractions) and continental-style Aires to stay overnight and/or empty our waste. Please refer to the CAMPfRA website.

More parks, and green spots in towns (e.g. in Tonypandy)

Yes - please consider the needs of the rapidly increasing numbers of responsible motorhomers that could visit the area and support the local economy - increasing use of height barriers, lack of accessible parking or official designated areas for overnight stops near attractions and towns are prohibitive and unwelcoming.

I'm very interested in accommodation very close to attractions as I'm a senior motorhomer. I'm looking forward to being included in your future plans for Rhondda.

28

First class eateries and not just expensive restaurants or faceless chains! For example, I was reading about a Korean Chinese restaurant in Pontypridd market with excellent reviews and people travelling from Cardiff to eat there. These independent businesses provide a huge service to tourism and will put RCT on the map! They need promoting and recognition.

As part of your accommodation strategy, I hope it includes areas for overnight stays in campervans/motorhomes! Along with service point for the same.

Motorhome Aires similar to those in France that provide overnight parking for motorhomes for a reasonable charge £5 to£7. Aires should also provide basic services such as fresh water and a place to empty black and grey waste. An Aire placed correctly will encourage motorhome owners to spend in the towns and villages that they visit contributing to the local economy.

Accessible to pet owners. Visited cardigan recently and all shops and cafes were accessible in some way to pet owners

Sustainability, green technologies, working with the landscape and our natural resources. Nature amd wildlife.

None

Aire type motorhome parking like in France.

Stopover provision for Motorhomes/campervans.

I think these are the key areas

Accessibility, Infrastructure and Connectivity : - disability led companies so life experience can fed into the key areas. - Accommodation accessible from trainlines. - Fund being given to potential small business over council led initiatives - to ensure employment in the area. RCT Theatre for example all managers currently live outside of RCT - not benefiting the public here who pay council tax here.

No

Parking for motorhomes as sometimes these large vehicles find it very hard to find a place where the vehicle fits which is within walking distance of places of interest and amenities. Also these tourists need a place to empty their waste tanks and toilets and refill with water, commonly known as an Aire in France. Campra.co.uk have details of how these could be set up. The word tourism derive from to tour which is what motorhomers do. We do not have separate vehicles usually so staying at campsites miles from any amenities/attractions is not always possible. Motorhomers are not freeloaders and most are happy to pay £10 to stay overnight near amenities, plus another £5 to empty their tanks etc.

These offer a broad range and woukd cover what we as motorhomers are looking for.

Can you please make it easier to see if it is suitable for a wheelchair user as I find it difficult to find out and it's very disappointing to get somewhere and find it's not suitable

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Campsites and motorhome parking for short stops
Events and family days out
All walking routes need to be assessed, improved and clearly mapped out, signs provided etc
Nope.
The section on Accommodation mentions "high end boutique hotels to quality bunkhouses and caravanning facilities". It makes no mention of campervans or motorhomes. There has been a surge in ownership of these types of vehicles, with many more people choosing to holiday in them. There may be campsites open over the summer months, however there are less opportunities in the winter, and many people don't want the restrictions of a formal campsite. RCT could consider provision of overnight parking for these vehicles to expand and extend the options for campervanners and motorhomers. If overnight parking (and sleeping) were permitted in RCF car parks (and businesses who want to increase their trade), it would attract more visitors. If there were locations with water and waste disposal facilities (grey and black), that would be even better. Powys already allow campervans and motorhomes to use their car parks for 1 night in 7, which is greatly appreciated and utilised.
The needs of motorhome tourists should be included in "accommodation". Nearly 400.000 are registered in the uk, many looking for safe overnight stays and waste disposal facilities. Camp sites are often miles away from the places motorhomers want to visit, and are therefore not useable.
Night time motorhome parking hopefully available for self conatined vehicles Max 48 hrs lets visitors arrive stop over night then explore the full day and hopefully spend within your area, eating and maybe a drink then move on next morning.
Free parking in the towns where's these attractions are for example Pontypridd and aberdare should all be free so people who use the attractions will also use the town centre
Parking
Mae angen datblygu app, am system bwcio gwell. Gall hyn helpu mwy o bobl bwcio neu canselo ei sessiynau cyn y digwyddiad. Gall mwy o amseroedd bod ar gael, fel 9 yyb, achos mae'n annodd cyrraedd i'r lido o Benarth am 8 yyb. Mae hyn hefyd yn syniad da achos gallwch lleihau y nifer o bobl am pob sessiwn. Pam roeddwn i yn nofio, roedd yna gormod o bobl yn y pwll.
More support for tunnel reopening for walkers, cyclists
CAR. PARKS. Can't get to the lido as a disabled person easily at all! can't get to that wonderful park easily at all. Things like that. Car parks. signs to 'park and walk' and disabled access made to be way more clear. Also more benches if there are walks to spots.
Definitely infrastructure / quality of facilities Experience ie pottery workshops, etc hands on like ar st Fagins . Maker markets , attractive coffee shops with Welsh language promotion too

30

I think it's worth focusing on promoting tourism from within Wales too - ie encouraging Welsh tourists to visit other parts of Wales.
I think Accessibility and Infrastructure are vitally important as access to products and attractions would be difficult otherwise. We also require a lot more accommodation facilities too.
Within accomodation, need to develop aires to accomodate motorhomes
Open recreational spaces such as the potential of a mid Cynon park. A 21 st century legacy to benefit future generations. The phurnacite area has wild life, lakes flat open space, good rail links / bus and road links. Give something to the community and could offer jobs by way of hospitality and maybe glampig, fishing, connections to the Cynon trail and links to liking through abercwmboi, to cwmaman and beyond.
In the accommodation section I think that provision for overnighting motorhomes (ie: hard standing parking places, preferably with a chemical toilet emptying point and drinking water) would attract visitors with considerable spending power. A small charge could be made for overnight parking and local businesses would benefit too.
Consideration for wildlife and the environment
Sustainability
Access
Definitely travelling via the buses , times and routes
sustainability, events and experiences
Bringing money to local business and clubs etc. and maximising Council income from car parks by looking at Aire type overnight parking for campervans and motorhomes with onboard toilets. Too many campsites are £20 to £40 a night and encourage motorhomes to stay on site for a solo traveller like myself this leaves tourists with little spare holiday money to spend supporting local pubs, cafes and shops.
No
AFFORDABILITY
Our Heritage & Culture.
Sustainability
Environmental quality. RCT is filthy. Who wants to visit am area where plastic sewage waste hangs from the riverbanks? If all the visitors drive here because the alternatives are so poor or limited what impact will that have on air quality? We have some great destination, such as Barry Sidings and Cwm Clydach lakes buy they're already popular and busy. How do we get people to explore other places both on foot and by bike? Treherbert is a great rail destination from Cardiff but what infrastructure is in place to support visits by EV bikes? Zero.
Education/ residential stays/ language immersion eg many international students in London have enjoyed staying in RCT for trips but don't think they'd come on their own without some structure and support.

31

Beautifying the area - making it an area people want to see and visit. Promoting pride in our own area. Encouraging (and helping) groups/charities to plant flower beds, tubs, hanging baskets etc to smarten up villages. Hospitality - encouraging local businesses & accommodation providers to develop their hospitality skills in relation to welcoming visitors and helping them with information and advice. Becoming ambassador's for the region! Welshness- promoting and encouraging our unique language at every opportunity; food, produce, menus, music etc
No
Showcasing Heritage & Culture. These aren't a sub-priority - these ARE prime attractors for tourism and should be front and centre, alongside landscape / walking
The local residence who may suffer as a result of increased tourism...
No
Think this covers it
Walks
Key to our success in Wales will be the road infrastructure the M4 relief road needs to be reassessed if wales and it's economy are to survive and flourish. It's a bottleneck that puts off many big industries in further future investment. We also need to be thinking of re-educating involving and adapting people to get involved and on board with this opportunity
I can't think of anything else, more accommodation is needed although I understand many Airbnb places are advertised online.
You mustn't forget the needs of residents. The Borough has seen an influx of people moving to the area from Cardiff etc during lockdown (myself inc) I am hoping to be able to support local businesses & independent traders for my daily requirements now I am working from home. Don't do like other tourist destinations (eg Bath) & force them out because business rates are too extortionate. In my opinion showcasing local produce etc whilst enabling traders to keep prices competitive will scratch the back of your tourism strategy.
Food hospitality
I feel like attractions is a big thing that needs improvement in the area.
Modernity. Moving on from the industrial poor past to a new Wales with gusto and optimism.
Provide stop over Aires for motorhome and campervan
Public transport and cost Low cost parking or free parking There is no free parking near the Lido for example Roads are narrow and a lot of traffic make it difficult to get around
No
NO

32

As a member of CAMpRA, I feel there are facilities in the RCT area that could accommodate motorhomes and campervans for overnight stops. Attractions such as Heritage Museum Park in the Rhonnda has a large car park (which has pre covid accommodated a travelling amusement fair) Across Europe even small towns and villages have Aires (fresh water, waste disposal for grey and black water and some with EHU...fee payable at meter or in the facility itself) many motorhomers/campervanners will shop, eat out in the area. I believe this type of accommodation would entice more visitors into region.

Where is Culture and Heritage in this list?

Attraction for businesses within RCT.

Sustainability History Language

Green tourism

Motorhome Aires.

As a motorhome owner I find that my needs aren't always met. I would like to see simple "Aire" type accommodation provided at a reasonable cost.   I've lost count of the times I've heard it said that theres plenty of caravan sites in the area. This shows a serious lack of understanding as motorhome4s needs aren't the same. The French have 6000 aires free or cheap to encourage tourism, why can't we have similar?

Litter.

Mae nifer o'n trefi megis Pontypridd yn dioddef gyda ymddygiad gwrth gymdeithasol. Rhaid taclo hyn cyn dechrau dennu mwy o ymwelwyr. Nid yw canoli nifer o wasanaethau yn ein trefi a chael hostel di-gartef yn Mill Street yn cydfynd a hyn oll.

Trafnidiaeth cyhoeddus Beicio

Sustainability and environmental impact. Wouldn't want this all to come at the cost of our ecosystems and local wildlife and landscape.

Any tourist would notice all the rubbish bins that are overflowing. Regular waste abd dog waste . Council need to double these collections if you want tourists to see a clean RCT.

33

Education for all ages not just school leavers. To provide a range of tourism, leisure & hospitality at ALL colleges within RCT so that colleges can build relationships with local businesses and organisations to enable students to develop their skills in their community to achieve a sense of pride in the service they can offer and/or lead into an entrepreneurial programme where there can be the opportunity to start up a tourist attraction/multi-use visitor hub (accommodation, attraction, experience, etc). Work with primary & secondary schools to embed tourism into Wales' new curriculum to create/develop: '-ambitious, capable learners, ready to learn throughout their lives -enterprising, creative contributors, ready to play a full part in life and work -ethical, informed citizens of Wales and the world healthy, confident individuals, ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society' AND to further embed the Well-being of Future Generations Act (2015): 'The Well-being of Future Generations Act 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.'

Infastucture. Upkeep of green verges. Prevention of litter and fly tipping

Town centres - Aberdare for example has very little in the way of interesting shops to attract visitors. Treorchy seems to be doing a much better job of that. Investment in our town centres would also improve job prospects in the area.

Impact on local communities - locals may be priced out of paid-for attractions, while housing costs and availability could well be impacted negatively.

Experience

The third aspect needs more work

All of the above have never been addressed in the past and there is no structure in place to allow people to better themselves

Provide Dedicated Touring Motorhome facilities, outside of Caravan sites, (but not exclusively from caravan sites). There are not enough 'Motorhome Stopover Points' with waste facilities and fresh water refill. Some caravan sites dont open all year round, but if they had a MSP just inside their entrance, this would give them extra income during their 'Closed season'. Sports grounds with lare car parks, could also benefit from providing these facilities, and allowing Touring motorhomes to park & sleep overnight.

Hospitality Environmental

34

Tourist Journeys and Stories. As someone who has travelled extensively across countries and regions in less well known areas, I used "self guided" maps that connected locations, experiences and culture through the use of stories, themes and helped surface those places which I would have missed. These tours, journeys etc helped bring to life themes, stories etc and made the smaller stuff just as important as the bigger hits. Wales has wonderful stories and themes that connect it to the world beyond, celtic connections and Cymraeg, natural wild and coasts, sport and adventure, industrial revolution and global Wales, Walks, Rides and Drives, Eco experiences in the "Green Lung of the UK" Famous Faces, Words and Places. These are all potential products which could include RCT as part of the map and overlay of journeys.

Sounds well balanced ...

Sport, the history of Sardis road would go a long way. Also working closely with Cardiff by introducing tours picking up from Cardiff. Day tour or two day tour taking advantage of local sites plus the key theme of accommodation

Outdoor attractions especially extreme sports

Local business and talent

Sustainability Longevity

Promotion of the Welsh Language

More regular transport

No homeless living on street Make our streets feel safe not bombarded whilst walking through town with people that are under the influence of substance misuse

Experience

Not at the moment.

Green projects and jobs - lobby to make the valleys a national park and hundreds of new jobs to maintain it could be formed No mention of the Valleys' rich history of music and theatre performances

Attractions for visitors but local people ? What accommodation Access , congestion , inappropriate use of Streets , Disablity Acsses , pie in the sky . Low skilled , low pay , Common with Tourism . Clarify Experience ?

Green industries/Carbon capture or Carbon Negative industry/business.

Clear walking routes

Education and training courses in local education to equip the workforce for the tourist sector.

Hyrwyddo Iaith a Diwylliant Bod yn eco Cyfeillgar Cefnogi Bywyd Naturiol yr ardal

aires for motorcaravaners

You should rethink accessibility! Accessibility is not just parking and road ways.. it's access for wheelchairs, prams Clydach lake has had structures put in place (to stop motorbikes I assume) but it's actually harmed wheelchair users. Motorbikes and quads are up there regularly (yesterday they were).

35

Agreement with objectives: If you have any comments relating to your answers, please tell us here:

If this is to be done well and we are to attract the right people into the tourism roles from the first contact person (the most important) to the, waiter/waitress, B&B owner or tourism product manager then all have to have the same welcoming ethos and be trained how best to serve the customer and this can't be done on the cheap. All roles need to be trained and paid a good wage so that the best people are attracted to the jobs. Too often hospitality and tourism are very low wage paying options and if we want the best product then we need to realise we will have to pay for it, and i assure you that will in turn bring greater returns in repeat visits.
Public transport links are especially important as it would be beneficial to the area as a whole to improve these. There is no public transport from West Wales to the Cynon Valley for example, so people can't access attractions here and will be more inclined to go to Pembrokeshire or other easy-to-reach areas. Driving cars ought to be seriously discouraged, but this can't be done while there is no substitute transport.
We need more, good quality accommodation within RCT. The road infrastructure needs looking at too.Also more investment in rhe rail links!!
Really need a Family farming experience, petting zoo like Cefn Mably park farm, Cantref or Greenmeadow farm near Cwmbran would be great attractions.
Tourism and information signs are improving and I've learnt a lot from them. Why is Llantrisant castle never mentioned ?Why not mention colliery sites, levels ,coal tips and the mining disasters on the information signs , this is our heritage. Roman way forts above Ferndale which I think I saw mentioned in Caerleon?
Accommodation is in very short supply and needs to be improved to keep people in RCT for more than day trippers. If they can stay local they will shop and eat local too.
if the vistors caint find hotels or attractions because of warnout roadsigns then tey wont come back here and wont have a good ting to say about things here
Yes if you want people to come back - clean up the Rhondda. Invest in bridleways and the main routes through the valley - the valley needs to look more like Treorchy and less like a blighted area that no one cares about or wants to invest in. Unique it needs to be, BUT not for the wrong reasons.
Supporting local business ventures to nurture local skills and develop key locations. For leisure and relaxation as well as Activities.
Accessibility needs to be in line with Wales Gov climate change strategy. Walking and cycling most important, public transport next, with private car journeys last. This applies to staff and supplier journeys as well as visitor journeys
It's critical that residents in RCT benefit from the opportunities with a focus on skills and training to support the development of the sector

36

Need to include local residents in each objective, residents are experts in their localities and we should harness that local knowledge and experience. Support needs to be made available to local residents to develop small businesses such as accommodation and hospitality. The recent trend of losing potential business facilities needs to be halted eg business premises being converted to housing. The planning process should discourage loss of business premises and more weight should be given in the planning process to any development which supports the objectives of the strategy
Staff are rude and no help at all
The Lido is great. Why isn't it open in the day during school time? Why shut it in the winter?
Whilst tourism produces jobs that may well be interesting and secure they are invariably relatively poorly paid. I have worked in the tourism sector.
Need to ensure that locals don't get priced out of the housing market because people from out of the area are buying property for air bnb
Accommodation is not that readily available, are there any camp sites or glamping sites? We have used forest camping sites in England which are natural and simple to do. Public transport is shocking in Wales outside the cities. The pembrokeshire coastal bus is great for walkers
ensure that new accommodation does not mean an influx of 2nd home ownership from outside the valleys ultimately pricing locals out of the housing market. Plan for this now before it starts in earnest.
Without those objectives, you would have nothing!!
If you are honest aiming to be the UK's premier destination for experience attractions you need to greatly increase your offering. Just building on top of what's already there is just not going to do it.
Transport infrastructure is woeful, you can't even get a taxi from a train station
The surrounding facilities,
They are all a bit disjointed, haphazard at present.
The strategy will only work if residents are onboard. They must buy into the idea of rct as a tourist destination. They need to be engaged and welcoming.
Why only car parking!!?? We are in a climate emergency!! You are also ensuring that children and young people are excluded as you can't drive a car until you are 17
Need good places to eat, though this might come under 'product'.
Include walking and cycling as well as car-based
To add to the already existing tourist attractions RCT would benefit hugely by opening the Rhondda Tunnel as a cycle and walking tunnel. At almost two miles long it would be the longest cycle tunnel in Europe and would attract tourists from all over the world.
The Rhondda Tunnel Team has worked tirelessly for years, it is time they are recognised for what they are trying to achieve.
Rhondda Tunnel Fawr..Railway line FACH up to Meardy....
Local residents need to be protected from any negative impact and their needs are to be considered
I feel that the creation of jobs for local people is of great importance.

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Connectivity should include cycling - I know there are a number of popular cycle routes already, including the Taff Trail of course. More could be made of more routes, for different abilities; and perhaps Bike Buses that people could get one-way, with bikes on board, in order to do a trail the other way. That would be good for families who can't do big distances.

All the above can only be achieved with the right level of investment

There are NO direct transport links between the Aberdare and Treorchy to premier shopping towns. It's over an hour by train, with a stop and change in Pontypridd-that's ridiculous.

In terms of experience, using the local population to converse with tourists will make an experience more memorable. For example advertising new activities to residents aswell as tourists will ensure residents will meet tourists as residents will then go to these new or improved activities

Please think of us for your training and I in fact can help with research through college projects as I teach BTEC Business and Travel & Tourism and we also deliver a BA travel course. I am at Rachel.morris@nptcgroup.ac.uk. Just w few miles from Zip world which I pass daily en route to Neath college.

Infrastructure should be priority before the rest. If a place is hard to navigate, has lengthy traffic and is generally difficult, no matter how attractive the place is you will not want to return and this will become a bigger problem if left ignored. Pontypridd Town Centre is a fine example of this. Pedestrianisation and difficult roads/traffic make this place unattractive and I'm speaking from a resident and business perspective. I've lived here 5 years and my business has been here 7 years and it's the same complaints from customers and fellow business owners/employees.

Need more variety of places to eat and drink not just fish and chip shops and takeaways

to make things also affordable to a variety of visitors

Free Motorhome overnight parking required

Ensure that parking opportunities include spaces for larger leisure vehicles such as motorhomes and camper vans. Overnight parking opportunities should be considered to allow people to stay, say in an underused car park, generating additional income, and enabling them to be staying overnight where they wish to spend money.

Including motorcaravan overnight parking (Aires) will attract touring motorcaravans. If you develop a tour route based on this network of Aires motorcaravans will stay in the area and visit more attractions

There are approx 360,000 motorhomes in the UK who are always looking for new and interesting places to visit year round. Please keep to accommodate us with European style aires

Public transport needs to be accessible for everyone - not just tourists. Treforest railway station has room for a ramped bridge (as in Ponytypridd & Porth) yet users are expected to divert to the junction near the university if they can't cross the stepped bridge. Users with luggage, buggies, wheelchairs or limited mobility are being disadvantaged. Lifts are not the answer - especially in Covid conditions.

Add aires for motor homes so that we can park up overnight without needing a site.

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Remember that accommodation isn't just hotels, B&Bs, campsites - it means accommodation for motorhome tourism too.
UK Motorcaravaners have a strong social media community. Good facilities and areas that welcome Motorcaravaners are shared, discussed and reviewed in many Facebook groups, online forums etc. As Motorcaravaners are the fastest growing group of potential tourists surely it would make sense to encourage them to your area as part of your strategy.
With reference to accommodation there is an ever evolving change in the type of accommodation that tourists are looking for. In particular those tourists who prefer to use their own accommodation as in camping and Caravanning. There are a growing number of Motorhome owners who travel in self contained and self sufficient units looking for a place to stop overnight before moving on. In mainland Europe there is an extensive network of 'Aires' . To this end a national movement CAMpRA, has been formed to support the setting up of a network of Aires across the UK. https://campra.org.uk/
Under accommodation please seriously consider motorhomes. This is a significant sector especially in the activity/experience field. If my OH goes mountain biking I need something to do within walking distance - I don't want to be on a campsite away from everything. Motorhomes want to be close to activities,pubs, restaurants - and don't need 'facilities' on tap. A weekend with no facilities is fine - just need to empty waste, refill with water on the 3rd day, but have solar so don't need EHU. Please work with CAMpRA to set up small Aires near to activities, villages. I don't want to cook so want to be close to cafes and pubs. Motorhomes also travel all year round, as well as a younger market that will love the activity/experience option, there is also a significant grey pound of early retirees that have time and want to explore new places. With the new limit of 90 days in Europe many of these early retirees will be looking for short breaks out of season and heritage and experiences will certainly appeal.
For the accommodation, to reiterate, the varied in nature is essential for motorhome visitors meaning more than just campsites.
Well done RCT
Adapting some of your car parking spaces such that motorhomes could park overnight would encourage us to visit again, for longer.
Please consider and provide overnight parking for the booming motorhome market. Most french towns and villages provide motorhome parking with fresh water and chemical toilet disposal to attract this tourist market. Motorhomes are self contained units that don't require the full facilities provided by campsites. Powys county council allow motorhomes to park overnight for 1 night in 7 in their town centre car parks
Centre parcs are expensive but brilliant business model to look at
Have a look at the campra website ref setting up of aires
Tourist or scenic routes (NC500 in Scotland) would help direct traffic of all types to specific areas & showcase the Valley. Ensure smaller, less direct roads are well signed. The infrastructure should accommodate parking, accommodation & leisure needs. Overnight stopovers for Camper-vans & Motorhomes & campsite signage (ensure appropriate type, tents, caravans etc) service points for Motorhomes would ensure responsible disposal of waste.

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Unsure if lots of accommodation is required unless unique and draws on the experience. Would be hesitant to create too much accommodation incase it wasn't visited, for example if people stayed in neighbouring counties and visited RCT
Accessibility: public right of way issues in paths leading from towns / stations up into the hills could do with being addressed. Even some new walking trails, such as around the spectacular but inaccessible Blaenrhondda waterfalls.
I spent much of my childhood in Wales, as my grandparents lived there. I am now retired, and a motorhome owner, and would love to spend more time there.
As the film quote says in Field of Dreams - "If you build it, they will come"!
With regard to Accommodation and Accessibility, etc, I comment here as an owner of a self-contained motor caravan (ie ours has washing and loo facilities on board). I'm a member of CAMpRA (Campaign for Real Aires UK - campra.org.uk), which is encouraging the setting up in the UK of European-style night stop-overs (Aires) to enable the same level of full touring freedom we see in Europe. The offering of Aires at attractions would provide Accommodation and Accessibility to the near 386K UK motor caravan owners and (when conditions allow) to the near 2 million European owners, who would readily tour in the UK if they knew Aires were ready for them. CAMpRA has a wealth of knowledge & expertise on Aires and stands ready to assist your consideration of them in your plans. Have a look at the website, where there are many information resources available to download for free.
All good sound strategies
Many people like to be able to visit and stay without requiring booking, hence the need for overnight short term parking (ideally with fresh water and waste disposal) for self contained Campervans and motorhomes as previously suggested. This is offered all over Europe and is starting to happen more in Scotland.
When building more parkings you need to make sure you don't do this at a cost of green spots in towns.
Yes - accommodation - please consider the needs of the increasing number motorhomers as visitors that could support the local economy but are currently not catered for at all - there is a real need for safe, accessible spaces for parking and official designated areas for overnight stays with basic facilities (like fresh water / grey waste water disposal) near attractions and towns.
Be aware of the growing need for travel in motorhomes to fully access areas of beauty without disrupting the ecological standings. Motorhomers can bring a lot if added revenue to areas if made to feel welcome with appropriate areas available
There's nothing nicer than hearing that young people have been able to find work and stay close the their family roots if they so wish. I speaking from experience as a Cornish person

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Please seriously consider provision for overnight parking for Motorhomes and Campervans. This can be as simple as allowing parking overnight at existing carparks like Brecon and Dyfed Council already do in their council car parks. It is also acknowledged that fly-tipping and unsociable behaviour is drastically reduced or eliminated where there are motorhomes parked overnight. There are over 350,000 registered motorhomes in the UK and with many people now preferring to holiday here instead of travelling to Europe where motorhomes are very much welcomed we may be losing out on a hugely valuable income source. People who can park nearby to use local restaurants and shops are often likely to recommend these locations through motorhoming clubs and Facebook groups. Please see the excellent work that www.campra.org.uk are doing to promote aires in the UK. Alternatively, look to the NC500 and how "touring" motorhomes have increased tourist revenue in Scotland.

This is what all authorities should be striving for.

Within products and attractions include use of innovation to improve customer experience

More needs to be done in the Fawr. Repaint those hideous brown bridges across the by-pass with brighter colours and softening landscaping features. The church village bypass has modern structures and bright at that! The existing colours whilst maybe harking back to the autumn industrial tones, merely keep us in that time. Functional engineering is not right in scale or character. As a project planner/manager I look at these structures in disbelief every time I drive past. How about offering grants to property owners who back into the by pass? Cosmetically they need improving, even with a simple painting initiative. Wouldn't cost too much and would do wonders in terms of raising the appearance.

Re accommodation - "increase the amount of accommodation available in the County Borough which needs to be of high quality, varied in nature and will also appeal to a wide range of visitors." This would benefit from incorporating 'Aire' type facilities for campervans/ Motorhomes. Not all Motorhomers want to spend a week in a campsite, and many campsites have minimum 2/3 night stays. The beauty of a Motorhome is visiting, spending money on food and attractions and then moving on. Self- contained units require only a space to park, some fresh water and emptying facilities, for which they would pay a fee. Please see CAMpRA.org.uk for useful info.

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As a Motorhome owner I am particularly interested in how RCT would improve facilities for specifically this category of recreational vehicle. In the UK there is very little understanding of this sector of the "camping" market, the UK focuses on full facility campsites, but these are predominantly aimed at Caravanning. I believe there is an opportunity to provide Motorhome "Aires" similar to those available throughout Europe. The UK has been slow to recognise the potential of such facilities. In Europe these Aires provide fresh water, disposal of waste water & chemical toilet waste, all for a small fee & with safe overnight parking often these are provided by the local council but also private commercial aires. Provision of these facilities would enable another revenue stream and increase visitor numbers for regions across the UK. Unlike Caravanning or camping, Motorhomers don't need "full facility" campsites as they are self contained, with on board water tanks, showers, toilets, roof mounted Solar panels and cooking facilities and also tour around an area, region or country as opposed to staying at one campsite for the duration of their trip. Motorhomers often have more disposable income, therefore their spend is higher in the local economy and they tour more frequently (all year round). Installing these facilities at existing car parks or land would be a relatively low investment. More information on "Aires" is available on https://campra.org.uk a Google search for Motorhome Aires in Europe will also reveal the popularity of these facilities across Europe.

Where i have put no - this is because this should not be council led. This needs to be led by the small businesses in RCT (grants need to be made available - not on your tendering service as it is not accessible to disabled people).

French style Aires for motorhomes. Your average motor homer is retired, is likely to have a stable reasonable income with more discretionary spending at their disposal than most families with children. They also travel all year round, not just at weekends and during school holidays. They are amongst that group who have not lost any income over the past 18 months and have money to spend.

Excellent objectives!

Wheelchair accessible information and accessible toilets

Not everyone wants to stay in hotels and B&B's. Utilise your car parks like Powys to allow motor homes to stay 1 night in 7 near attractions like Rhondda Heritage Park.

In your Accommodation section you never mentioned accommodating the large number of motorhomes which are travelling around the country. These people often holiday in the U.K. during the off season and are looking for 1 or 2 overnight stops near any visitor attractions. Existing campsites don't often provide what is necessary as they are often far away from the attractions and are set up as destinations rather than for overnight stop overs and closed in the winter months. In general car parking spaces around towns and attractions are geared towards the standard car not oversized vechicles. Think motorhome, think local spending.

It's vital that RCT is put back on the map. The world is changing and we have to love with the times.

Ref Accommodation: "high quality, varied in nature and will also appeal to a wide range of visitors" and Accessibility - as one of many Motorhome users ample parking both daytime and for overnight stops is key to an area being attractive to visit.

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As mentioned before, provision of overnight parking opportunities for campervans and motorhomes, similar to "Aires" in France, would be a fantastic addition to your plans. Such facilities could easily be incorporated into the new car park and toilet facilities mentioned in the plan.

Accessibility. Providing dedicated overnight motorhome spaces in car parks will increase tourism all year round, as many motorhomers tour in winter as well. Dedicated overnight parking for motorhomes will allow motorhome tourists access to the areas attractions which would otherwise be difficult.. provision of waste disposal facilities would be discussed on motorhome forums.

Night time motorhome parking hopefully available for self conatined vehicles Max 48 hrs lets visitors arrive stop over night then explore the full day and hopefully spend within your area, eating and maybe a drink then move on next morning.

Just hope action follows this survey, lots of plans just disappear.

Accessibility throughout the Rhondda needs to be urgently looked into. Lack of public car parks at treorchy for visitors/shoppers.

The area is unique but it really does need bringing into the 21st century in terms of facilities and attractions and quirks ie an attraction in krakow is a click tower it's someone coming out in the hr to signal the time!   Not sheep growling the shops . Could have a walrus😂

I an strongly against increasing accomodaiton if this means local housing suffers. Wales has a second home/holiday home problem and we have been blessed so far that this hasn't come to RCT. Hotels are also a part of this problem when they displace local residents and community centres.

In terms of accommodation consider visitors in motorhomes that are self-sufficient and want to tour around i.e. don't want to stay on an expensive campsite where they don't need any of the facilities.

Part of the charm of the area is its inaccessibility. I don't mean for disabilities, I mean look at how Pembrokeshire has developed and been ruined of its charm by major roads and car parks everywhere.

Need to address motorhome aires to attract this high spending community

Further information re provision of overnight motorhome parking is available on the CAMpRA website. (Campaign for Real Aires)

Affordability is key to boosting tourism

Accommodation should include provision for motorhome stopovers in the form of "Aires" which allow short stays of one night for a reasonable fee of around £5-£10, without the need to book in advance or commit to staying more than one night. Ideally located within walking distance of towns and villages allowing use of local businesses. Campsites very rarely provide this.

Please supply somewhere for campervan and motorhome to park overnight in assessable areas. Campsites are too far out of town and are not suitable for our needs

All the above are gimicks , no substance , just for show and more over constantly wasting money

There should be more hotels/accommodation provide around RCT

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EV charging for both bikes and cars needs to be a key part of this connectivity. But several of RCTs valleys dont even have decent cycle routes and where they do exist the connections are poor if not dangerous. Connectivity also needs to be developed between valleys not just up and down them. The Rhondda tunnel for example would provide excellent access to the neath valleys and bike park potentially creating a circular valleys touring route.

As well as building on existing attractions what about developing new ones? At the top end of Cynon valley there is a wealth of attractions to be developed. Hirwaun common - site of the rising of the first red flag. Leading to 1831 Merthyr uprising. A commemorative plaque, trail or event?   Hirwaun common - a park & ride train station at old washery site Linked to a "Twin peaks" bus plying between the Rhigos mountain (Craig-y -Llyn) & Pont ar daf (for Pen-y-Fan). Environmentally friendly? Alleviate parking problems at Storey Arms? Encourage walkers & visitors? The Rhigos Hoard - public access to Llyn Fawr for picnics, camping/glamping etc. Promotion of the Bronze Age importance of site and its artefacts in National museum of Wales. Tower colliery museum - from its origins as a working pit through to miners' buyout (unsure how much ZipWorld has done regarding this ?) but the iconic red brick former colliery baths is an ideal location. Significance of Tower name i.e. Crawshay's tower built as a folly? Hirwaun ironworks - trail and development. Merthyr Tydfil promotes itself as an "iron town" (and has big plans afoot to coordinate its iron heritage). Hirwaun could be an iron village? Hospitality businesses would benefit? Rhigos mountain(Craig-y-llyn) - better development of site on top of mountain and reinstatement of workmen's cottages at either side of mountain (Rhondda side one a holiday let?)

I worry about creating tourist accommodation, it would be awful if went the way of places like West Wales where young people can't afford to live in the area. I think holiday homes should be well controlled

The visitor perception, rather than local perception, is paramount. Local residents dismiss mining heritage. For visitors, it is a prime attractor. The same is true of landscape / walking, culture & heritage. Visitor rather than local perception / appeal is paramount

The availability of accommodation is currently very poor. Parking is always an issue. Finding more local businesses and engaging with them to offer more local produce/services would be a good thing. Promoting our natural area as an attraction would be good too. Linking it in with our history e.g. walks involving our old mine areas where there are monuments or promoting famous 'sons' or 'daughters' of the area would be good. Just promoting RCT more in general really as we are probably consigned to boring history in most people's minds.

Couldn't agree more with this plan However for this to succeed there must be opportunities for the average person and should not all be about investment from the big players. Share it out and you will have a better product to offer. Something similar to Treorchy high street a fantastic place to shop with real people and real and amazing culture

USW offers tourism degrees along with local colleges and sixth forms, use what you have and the people who already live there.

provide more footpaths & cycle tracks

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In Pontypridd we have the national lido. If you park in the vast Catherine's car park, you walk down the underpass and are greeted by druggies, beggars and statues of spice takers.

It is important the accommodation is high end to attract a wide range of people - like The Vale Hotel.

Sustainability on all levels and all areas need to be looked at.

Clearly marked trails stating how long the walk should take would make a big difference. Even locals are not sure how to access the trails on mountains because there is poor signage.   Walks that begin at train stations would help those who are not reliant on a car.   Cycle paths need improving so they don't spit cyclists out into dangerous sections. Current maps give the impression of a seamless ride yet in reality this is often not the case e.g Cwmbach to Aberdare, or any ride that involves Pontypridd.

Rhaid gweithio mewn partneriaeth o fewn a thu hwnt i'n ffiniau ar greu y pecynnau gwyliau megis gyda Caerdydd.

Dwi'n credu bod angen datblygu a hyrwyddo'r cymoedd fel ardal wych i feicio. Bydd hwn yn denu twristiaid o bob man.

I think certainly some of our visitor attractions could do with sprucing up and making a bit more exciting; the heritage park could be amazing but I haven't been there in a couple of years because last time it was a bit naff. The new cafe area there is however fab.

Include education to incorporate Wales Curriculum and the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015. Ensure that infrastructure and connectivity has a focus on being able to use transport into RCT rather than out of RCT to the likes of Cardiff, Swansea etc

Transport to Valleys to and from Cardiff is appalling. Over filled carriages and early finishing service

There is little to disagree with in the above, they are all great objectives, but they need to go further. Tourism needs to be a year-round attraction - with our climate how will that be achieved? Investing in town centres and attractions that are accessible (both physically and in terms of cost) for local residents are also important to the long term prosperity of the region.

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Attractions - do not need to be unique, but must be high-quality and safe. They also need to be accessible to locals. Accommodation - Airbnb can have a very negative impact on the rental property market for locals, as can provision of rental cottages. Make sure locals are not priced out of living here. As much as possible, travel by private transport should be discouraged. We don't want more roads and traffic. The local infrastructure and facilities (e.g. existing cafes) are not suited for high traffic volumes. Green space should not be converted to car parks. Employment - staff need to be well-paid, as well as "valued". Volunteers should be used minimally to provide work support - free workers can undermine existing staff and can help keep wages down. One thing that needs to be done is to reduce the amount of litter in the area. Volunteer litter picks help but it's a never-ending battle, at present at least.   I also think more needs to be made of other heritage / cultural sites e.g. the iron works and Gloucester's in Hirwaun, as well as other "recent history" sites / events e.g. the brick works. While it would be costly to get the iron works, for example, up to scratch, at least providing information boards at entries to the site would be good. Information boards would be useful at many sites across RCT e.g. overlooking the Tower Colliery, at the wind farm, at the Arcway entrances etc.

The last aspect is covered in the first and fourth

All the above is pie in the sky , again there is no infrastructure or appropriate space to enable the necessary create the infrastructure

Accessibility, Infrastructure and Connectivity. The introduction of Height Barriers at car parks is a great put off for Touring Motorhome owners to stop and visit towns/villages. Also Council's decisions to not allow overnight Parking/sleeping in their car parks. Motorhomes can act as unpaid antisocial behaviour deterrents. A small charge to stay overnight would also help Council coffers.

All of this will create a positive legacy for rct

As a resident of RCT & a commuter within the borough, I would like the following points to be noted when promoting the county@ Tonypandy station isn't welcoming: access on main town side is via secluded footpath, footbridge over a river & subway from one direction   Dinas station – no designated footpath on bridge from Dinas itself (unlike similar bridge in Hopkinstown) Trehafod station - no wheelchair access other than via secluded path on one side: not served by main entrance   Parc & Dare events end after last train/bus from Treorci down the valley: this increases car use   Traffic system in Pontypridd generates more Co2 as cars must detour due to no right turn from bus station into The Parade   No interchange - unlike Caerphilly - bus & train stations are are opposite ends of town Smoking is not restricted @ Bus station - litter & health breach: drivers are the worst offenders

Better and more reliable transport is needed

Increasing the amount of accommodation seems to be a key need, especially in the Rhondda areas - I only know of two or so places where it's even possible for people to stay. Transport links are also an issue in the same area - there are no train lines from Porth upwards, and the cycle lanes force users to spend a lot of time on the road with the traffic. Parking is an issue in many areas, it would be great to have more! So I agree with a lot of these points.

There also needs to be a provision for performances, concerts and gigs, to create more value for tourists and support the creative industries

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Not one of the above has credentials . Pure gimmicks
Rhondda only has one main attraction through RCT websites which is the heritage center. There are a lot more smaller businesses that would benefit from this support. Cambrian Village Trust, Welcome to Our Woods, Barry Sidings. Zip World should only be helped if they open their doors to social businesses around them which they are not doing at the moment. Their business model does not help the surrounding area. Long term support would require this.
Consideration of developing the railway line beyond Hirwaun to the site of the"Old Hirwaun washery (the line already exists) to feed the Zip World attraction. The land would also be ideal for a park and ride to transport people into Aberdare Town.
Accessibility needs looking at Providing jobs for local residents is a positive step. (Maybe look at the culture of the jobseekers ''benefit seekers'' in Rhondda). Providing jobs is fantastic but when people opt for benefits because it's easier and actually pays more than local jobs, that's a broken system.

Any other general comments:

Clean up the litter and dog mess .Many walkers and visitors comment how lovely the area is but then say litter fly tipping and dog mess spoil it !
Love to see organised visitor activity packages offering value for money.
I support the general thrust of the draft Strategy. However, I feel that there needs to be greater investment in "housekeeping" within the County Borough. I am thinking particularly at the extent of litter and dog mess. (I realise that these aren't the Council's fault but greater cleansing and enforcement are vital if we are not to be embarrassed.) I also feel that road signs within the County Borough need to be cleaned regularly. It's not attractive to be welcomed to, for example, the Rhondda by a dirty "Welcome to/Croeso i Rhondda" sign.
It would be nice to have a purpose build attraction with reasonable prices for families, such a lodges linking to a fun centre for all weather activities with outdoor walks and cycling, Cambrian lake side has a lot of potential
You have identified Ponty lido as a desirable attraction yet it's closed more than it's open. Nobody as yet has answered my question as to why this is as other lidos are open most of the year.
The overlap with the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority needs to be considered and approaches should be complimentary between the two organisations - in many ways RCT is the primary gateway to the BBNPA
Link this strategy with town centre improvements

47

Only that on Page 4 - Product and Attractions there is a section that says: "Alongside the delivery of these major attractions it is important that we maximise the benefit and use of our smaller scale assets such as Clydach Vale Lake and Nantgarw Chinaworks as they have a significant role to play in providing a complementary and additional offer alongside our major attractions" I want to point out that the 'Cwm Clydach Country Park' will be designated as a 'Country Park' in the next month or so and will put it on the same footing as Dare Valley in our Tourism offer. It is not just a lake (in fact there are 2) in Clydach. It has the Lakeside facilities, attractions, activities, sports facilities and i think it needs more prominence in the strategy. Especially as in ecology it is a site of special interest with butterflies and plants not found anywhere else in Wales. The environmental tourism side could easily be exploited in this venue.

Not enough joined up thinking as far as tourism and the green economy are concerned. These areas should be inextricably linked and are vital for sustainable development of our region. RCT also needs to support the proposed Wilder Wales development in the Heads of the Valleys area, as it will achieve four of the five objectives and raise demand for good quality accommodation in the area.

We got to sell RCT to people

What about Hirwaun and the distillery?

International links tourists info on flights and large airports on entry liked to Visit Wales and a special tourist office opposite Cardiff Castle and Paddington

It is a really exciting plan, hope the tunnel goes ahead in Abernant! Will need more coverage on the media, Weatherman walking style or wildlife programs to introduce the area to the wider world. Have noticed S4C do a lot of outdoor activies coverage, be great to get them on board. Good luck!

I agree with the draft but not there at the moment.Road network is terrible. None of the bypasses join up they just seem to stop and start at random.You need to look at the area as if you have never been here before and ask yourself would you stay or come back ?Can you compare to Stone Henge , The Chedder Gorge , Knowlth/Newgrange , Wormshead , The Peak District , London , Cardiff , Bristol , Brynmawr , Caerphilly Castle etc.? That is what you are competing with !

when i have been to other places i have been able to read the road signs which are warn out the road signs here are warn out and nobody wants to do anything about it any vistor comes here the wont find were they going because of warn out road signs

I am very willing to be part of any consultation group moving forward as a person who lives outside the Rhondda but visits and also owns a second home there. I am a Professor of Law at Manchester University and have many skills that I could bring to the table as an external voice. I want the very best for the Rhondda and this could really help regenerate the area and also keep people in the Rhondda and invest in the Rhondda.

48

RCT has a lot to offer and given the opportunity we'll thrive. Incentives for local key buildings In key locations to be put back in to use. These opportunities need to be created.
Mountain biking has increased in popularity during lockdown so bike trails would be excellent
Environment and sustainability are largely ignored
Industrial heritage is key, but also there should be a focus on how the area has recovered and become green again.
Use the library service more to enhance what you want to achieve
Hire people with some cleaning skills bar courtesy
Hopefully there will be adequate funding for this.
Tourism can never be a panacea for wider economic woes,
Advertise your amazing Lido and initiatives like the Big Run - both wheelchair accessible and welcoming !
No
Open the lido for longer hours so more people can visit. You can charge for visits and other things to make money
Really use the topography and our history to create tourism opportunities. The lido is the perfect example of restoring a historic site to modern standards, and it is a wonderfully unique site. Simply wow... that is the blueprint.
No
Litter Its not a great experience when the Taff trail is a trail of litter or parks have rubbish everywhere or worse. As residents of RCT we are used to it but you go elsewhere and you realise how filthy people in RCT are, therr needs to be more pride to keeping the roads and countryside clean and more sanctions for people who lob rubbish out of their cars
We must sell & project ourselves with positive words and images and stop talking about deprivation and coal. There are only an aging small population that remember coal yet we're still banging on about it. we must advertise what beauty & nature & community we have
No
See comment above.
I have a recommendation. The old bingo hall coming down in Pontypridd. That site should be developed as a tourist centre and hub for the RCT tourism. It is centralised and easily accessible location for information and presentation of what's available throughout the Borough and beyond. To be a gateway to the valleys.
Nice idea but not achievable without massive financial investment. Which I'm guessing won't happen.
Think outside the box and put yourselves in the position of a paying customer who has never been to Wales.
The surrounding facilities,
Put it in place before claiming there's a premium visitor attraction. Need to build the foundation first so reputation can be positive.

49

We already have some great attractions, outside spaces etc that are not properly maintained and used to their best potential. These need to be addressed before we increase the attractions etc.
I got stuck in traffic on Wednesday 20 May trying to leave about 9.30am as quite a bottle neck no idea why so also consider the traffic lights in the town centre as people will remember the end of their visit (peak end rule) so don't ruin the lovely experience with an awful drive.
We have tried expanding our local tourism but unfortunately we have been badly let down by NRW. Unless all government bodies are willing to help to make this work then there is very little prospect of it being a success. In my opinion NRW are an absolute disgrace.
Suggest linking up with Design Commission for Wales and people like the National Trust for ideas about improving the built and natural environment in general to make some areas more attractive in general.
I think the strategies sound very good. However, if you want people to come to the county Borough, it needs to look presentable. At the moment, certain areas look dull and deter visitors from wanting to come back
Far better advertising and signage needs to be implemented.
Back the Rhondda Tunnel Societies project and help get in to fruition.
The black has gone, this green and beautiful land is world enspiring let's use it to our advantage....
As outlined, embracing and showcasing RCT's landscapes, culture and heritage is key to attracting tourism to the region. RCT has numerous existing prominent cultural organisations - it would benefit from showcasing them
What about food? Accommodation is rightly highlighted but the quality of food availability, restaurants, training, hospitality etc is also important and could boost local sourcing, and provide training and jobs.
the development of the skills and the creation of the jobs ensures that local people in the boroughs are given ample opportunity to secures these opportunities.
As a very passionate 'RCT' man its really good to see and feel RCT's ambition to make it happen. Why cant we we be up there with the best. The legacy of a first class environment will be job security and bright future for the county
There are lots of areas that are completely ignored and would prove a fantastic asset. You only have to look at the Elan Valley and the tourists that go there. There are reservoirs in rct that could be used as a tourist attraction given the appropriate funding
No
Using our valleys natural strengths (eg wildlife and walks) should be a priority ensuring walks such as pen pych or clydach lake are well maintained. However transport into the valleys in particular should be improved as this is limited in certain aspects

50

Let's promote our fabulous Rhondda at Cardiff and Bristol airport, Cardiff rail station, offer easy transport links and sight seeing packages to visitors including walking tours, half a day, full day, two sat, week long etc. Specialist tourism is growing. Learners biking around the amazing bike routes through the forestry with bike hire. A guided tour through the forestry abs up Pen y fan etc ... maybe even link with local walking Groups.
I think as a whole it is a fantastic project if done thoroughly and correctly.
More needs to be done to promote a sense of pride in our communities .Litter is a big problem and more needs to be done to educate people about littering and dumping of rubbish in our countryside. By involving more local people and creating jobs in the tourist industry or help for people to set up their own small businesses that would benefit both the community and tourism would help to include people and create a sense of pride. There is far too much that excludes some people either by not being affordable or by bringing in people from outside the community to benefit from the jobs that tourism could create. Less big companies and more smaller local business
Be more open to suggestions, stop negativity.
Great area i went to the polytechnic of Wales 1980-84
You may wish to consider the approach being used by Powys Council in response to the need to provide for motorhomes.
As above. The CAMPRA campaign for motorhome parking is growing in stature and had been very successful in the growth of UK Aires. Please provide overnight parking facilities for motorhomes.
Have visited lido and beautiful park many times but lack of lunch options and not clear where to park
Anyone travelling by train between Treforest & Pontypridd will be forgiven for thinking a natural disaster has fallen on the residents of Wood Road overlooking The Broadway embankment. In reality, the slope along half the route has became a dumping ground for residents. It looks like an open cast land-fill site. At this time of year, it should be aglow with bluebells. The approach to Porth in Rhondda is also a disgrace.
Contact@campra.org.uk We have been working with councils and other organisations to provide parking and facilities for motorhomes similar to the facilities found throughout Europe and known as Aires.
Please consider the use of Aires - overnight parking for self-contained motorhomes, with or without basic services, for a modest fee. Aires can be sited on car parks which are not needed at night (e.g. car parks at visitor attractions). They provide a parking space only, so do not allow the use of tents, awnings, BBQs etc. However Aires encourage motorhomers to stay in an area thus accessing visitor attractions and local amenities and boosting the local economy

51

It would be great to see your area activity encouraging Motorcaravan tourists by providing 'Aires' as an alternative to traditional campsites. These can easily be set up by allowing overnight parking of Motorcaravans in car parks that would otherwise empty overnight. This would not only generate more parking income but would allow more visitors to spend an evening in your area and the visitors would spend their money in your area if allowed to park overnight. If waste disposal facilities are provided by either the local authorities or if local businesses and organisations were encouraged to provide facilities for Motorcaravans they would stay longer. Please see www.campra.org.uk for more information and examples of where Motorcaravan tourism is benefiting the areas that welcome Motorcaravan tourists.

Offer a range of parking and servicing options for motorhome and campervan users, who are self contained and wanting easy and good value places to stay where we can spend our time and money supporting your region's business. Broadly speaking this could be, like Powys, releasing car parks for an overnight stop, or encouraging Farm Shops, sports venues or attraction parking to allow overnight stops. Providing services which include water, grey waste and chemical toilet disposal ensures that we can travel effortlessly without the need for campsites, which don't suit us all. Staying in the heart of a place and feeling its vibe is more important to us than staying in a regimented campsite with steep costs for facilities we don't use. Thank you

No

French style motorhome stoves Stop over would be great to see

As above

No

I am a Motorhome owner and have visited your area when my son was at university in Pontypridd. I struggled to find anywhere to park up for the night when we came down to see him. A Motorhome aire which consisits of somewhere to park with access to fresh water and toilet emptying facility would be extremely useful and would bring in a huge number of Motorhomers.

With the amount of motor homes now in the country, setting up aires would attract many to the area for. Very little outlay yet generate substantial income(eg £5 per van per night maybe more if water and waste facilities could be provided) it would also increase business sales in the area from the motor homers using local shops and attractions.

I like the idea of building itineraries. I also think it would be beneficial to create walking route maps, mountain biking trails. Locating more beautiful areas and getting people inspired to go and enjoy a walk.

Address the fly-tipping and off-road biking problems.

I think it is a really good strategy to revive the economy of a beautiful area.

52

It's clear that staycations and motor caravan tourism are key fundamentals in current and future leisure plans. Increasingly, motor caravan owners tour all year round, so the economic benefits of providing Aires for them won't be confined just to the traditional holiday season period.
Please consider dedicated motorhome parking/aires, please have a look at all the information on the Campaign for Real Aires CAMpRA website, there's a huge amount of useful information about the benefits and costs of setting up an Aire.
I wish you luck and a successful outcome.
Promote appropriate parking for motorhomes
As I said before: marked walking and bicycle trails, making sue that motorbikes and quads have their own places to ride as there are a lot of them riding the hills at the moment, more greenery spots in towns. Don't transform any green spots in to parking or affordable, or any other kind of accommodation. There are so many empty houses across RCT that I don't think it's necessary to build any new affordable accommodation. Use what you've already got. Save green spots in towns. Make towns more pedestrian friendly. Build for people not for cars.
I think you are doing a fabulous job. Best wishes for the future...But make sure the new accommodations are created with all year round facilities. As a motorhomer... we tour all year and prefer the quieter months (especially now) to the hot overcrowded months.
I live in Rhondda Cynon Taff and its a beautiful place with a beautiful name and it needs to be front and centre of all literature promoting the area! Otherwise, we might as well rename it Areceetee. I don't think it gets across the essence of where Rhondda Cynon Taff is in Wales let alone the UK. Although I have used the abbreviation like you, I really hate that no-one uses the full title anymore. I really hope that if anyone is going to go out and promote our lovely county that they actually use the full name.
There must be provisions included for one or two overnight stays near or with towns for campervans/motorhomes.
Policing needs to become more visible in many areas of rct in order that people feel safe. Some parts of rct have absolutely shocking reputations
Focus on present and future. Not only around the heritage albeit that is an important part of our past. As above, improve the visual appearance of the corridors. First impressions matter! Fence off areas to prevent fly-tipping to protect our asset and police problem areas. Improve bike trails and introduce interpretative bike maps across the hills - bike routes are an asset, secure and enhance these. Sustainable and healthy!
Looks exciting!

53

Disabled people are being shut out in RCT - accommodation not near transport - tendering and grants for small business to grow and make areas suitable for tourism are not open - Drugs are being grown in empty buildings linked to individuals linked with the council and local MPS (these buildings need to be back in use) - Residents are being ignored and not given opportunities to improve their own environment. - RCT are trying to manage it all, instead of releasing finances for small businesses to grow - Culture here is also English language which is also welsh and belongs to the welsh people in the valleys - stop punishing those who are not welsh speaking

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No.

Please visit www.campra.co.uk to see how local councils can help motorhomers tour your area lawfully by working together.

No. Very satisfied by the suggestions and look forwars to seeing them come to fruition.

I wish RCT every success, we have as much to offer as many other destinations in Wales. This is very promising for the area.

I'm a wheelchair user and we visit in a campervan we are self contained in our vehicle but we don't like campsites where we have to pay for facilities we often can't use and we need to be close to the town so we can frequent the local shops

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Please give us experiences. Things to do, places that are current and relevant and insta worthy (which in turn will increase tourism). We have to travel to other parts of the country for so many activities - bowling, cinema, mini golf, roller skate parks etc. Put it on the doorstep (with a reasonable price) and it will encourage local people as well as visitors to come. Everyone is desperate to get out of the house and we need local places to go to!

Please consider the provision of "Aire" type facilities, and overnight parking opportunities for campervans and motorhomes. As mentioned before, facilities could easily be incorporated into plans for new car parks and toilet facilities.

Motorhomers are largely older people with disposable income and therefore a valuable source of revenue wherever they go. We are not asking for free overnight stays. We are willing to pay for services provided. Research had shown that antisocial behaviour in car parks is reduced when motorhomes are allowed to overnight. Motorhomers go to places where they are welcomed and have appropriate facilities, and avoid places where they are not. A survey recently showed that motorhomers spend on average £40 to £50 per day when they are welcomed. Don't miss out on this revenue! Thank you.

Night time motorhome parking hopefully available for self conatined vehicles Max 48 hrs lets visitors arrive stop over night then explore the full day and hopefully spend within your area, eating and maybe a drink then move on next morning.

54

Parking required to accomodate visitors. For example Lido...alot of people came once and once alone dud to parking
Action please
car parks and road improvements.
Parking for rising number of visitors, road accessibility for increased traffic.
Looks good could do better!
Honestly, I would really like to see an ice rink in RCT. We only have the one down at Cardiff Bay, but ice skating and the cardiff devils are incredibly important to south wales culture. So many rugby fields but our other most popular sport - ice hockey - means having to travel to the capital or to bristol.
Tourists or incomers are not always respectful of the local ethos. In particular here I am thinking of language. They already complain about signage and having to hear and receive welsh in the street and in work. The language needs to be presented as a draw - it's a whole other country. You know as soon as you cross the border the signs change. It needs to be part of what is quintessentially welsh and not be a hidden part of the package. It's like going to France only closer!
Develop motorhome aires to welcome visitors
Please consider sharing out the vision and opportunities to improve all lives and communities. Again, I stress the fantastic opportunity to create a 21st century park for mid and lower valley at abercwmboi. The nature, connectivity and attractiveness can enhance loves and also feed into the wider tourism of the whole rct area. Make our communities proud to be living here too. Raising aspirations and inclusion.
I think it is excellent and very well thought-out. I hope that tourism in the area really takes off.
There needs to be focus on the environment and the protecting the beautiful wildlife. Litter is a huge problem in RCT as is noise pollution from the increasing number of loud modified exhausts. These are enough to put tourists off from returning.
CAMPra is campaigning group encouraging parking for Campervans motorhome in appropriate locations and discouraging parking in unsuitable areas which we have no choice at the moment as very little is available in the uk think airs in France
Again, I only visit places which are camper van / motorhome friendly. I am fully off grid with compost loo so need very little. I am looking for cheap (£5 to £10) places to park over night so I have money to spend in local shops, cafes and pubs. Too many campsites are really expensive for just an overnight sleeping spot and often drain money from the local economy. Thankfully many Councils are starting to open car parks to self contained (with toilet) vehicles for over night parking as are some clubs (such as Hereford Rowing Club, Aberystwyth Rugby Club etc.) and village halls. In these times of economic recovery a more flexible, proactive approach is needed to maximise income in more innovative ways.
Consider broader political environment

55

Stop thinking RCT and start thinking South Wales!
I have brought many visitors to RCT over the years and they've really enjoyed it but the antisocial behaviour, alcoholism and drug abuse is an issue. On one trip I was bringing a group of Japanese visitors from London to Cardiff by train then changing trains to come to the valleys but the first sight that greeted the visitors was a steaming drunk woman riding another woman like a donkey on the platform. I was mortified. Also I try to avoid the druggies in Ponty centre when taking any visitors out. My Japanese visitors loved the sheep up the Bwlch and my Birmingham visitors really enjoyed the local pubs. I'm scared to take some international visitors to the local pubs due to some bad experiences with racism and unfriendly behaviour to outsiders. So local friendly attitude is important. The Heritage Park cafe is good for international visitors and they feel relaxed there. My visitors stay with me or have enjoyed the Blueberry Inn in Ponty or stayed at the Inn in Pontyclun. I wish there was somewhere in Ponty that is affordable and not above a pub for some visitors. All visitors have enjoyed the parks and Taff Trail.
Excellent idea to promote tourism as the area returns to its natural beauty and landscape. It also has so much to offer in cultural, industrial and social history. If this is to become the way forward it cannot be jeopardised by ill thought out or badly planned developments that will not only detract from its natural beauty but will destroy the environment and harm nature and wildlife. The two are incompatible.
Ensure those you have working for you have a keen understanding of Welsh working class identity and politics. Celebrate our uniqueness - of wet try to generalise the experience to be like other places in Wales we'll fail.
We need a town that is full of independent shops that is similar to say Narbeth. Make it somewhere people want to visit and return to.
The tourism strategy does not need to reinvent the wheel and invent new offers. Rather, it needs to look closely at the untapped visitor attractions / points of interest, work with them and showcase them - the brass bands, choirs and musical heritage; the many chapels / remnants of the industrial era; the traditional pubs and walks; and of course the landscape. This is what will attract visitors to travel to RCT specifically
Please consider the impact on residence. I know it will crest jobs but we also have to live here.
Maybe add in eating out guide to the accommodation strategy List all of our parks in things to do guide
You need to get more money from Welsh government to be able to get this up and running for people to spend more in R C T .

56

Involve our history by all means, as that is very important, but also look for offers to attract the younger element of visitor too. Zip World is a really good thing I think. Perhaps more offers like that? Then once the 'enticement' exists we could layer on the history and heritage elements somehow? I.e. how great ideas started in RCT or how famous people came from RCT? Then delve deeper into the real history such as the mines or Tonypandy Riots and Churchill, then older still for more folklore aspects? Ask the visitor what 'secrets' are waiting for them to discover if they visit us?

I hope this works

No

In terms of RCT tourism Stratergy I believe it also needs to be widely accessible to residents in the area many of which have no jobs or low income. Attractions should not be over priced and should have a fair booking system to ensure all can enjoy.

Open the old railway lines to smaller villages in the Rhondda. Poor famies without cars in terraces are unable to escape their geographical trapping of the landscape without decent transportation to tourist attractions.

Encourage tourism which will benefit the local economy.

No

Accommodation as a priority to ensure that tourists don't stay in neighbouring boroughs and travel in to RCT - as this will lessen the income to the borough. Supporting local business to develop a variety of accommodation options through funding streams to promote diversity and economic growth within the borough

Lack of suitable accommodation especially in the Cynon valley

You come out with these surveys and do exactly as you want in the first place

It is important to have a focus on small towns and engage with communities to entice tourists to RCT.

As a resident in RCT, I would want to know more as things progress and also have more say in how RCT designs itself within this area.

The only way forward is to welcome tourism and creat jobs.

You havnt mentioned the budget for RCT Tourism Strategy, so its impossible for tax payers to evaluate " Value for money"!

I hope the dream becomes a reality. Can see it being beneficial for all.

Mae bach yn ddi-fflach a ddim yn cyfeirio at yr iaith a threftadaeth a diwylliant mewn modd sy'n cyffroi. Dim digon o bwyslais ar weithio mewn partneriaeth chwaith. Y delweddau bach yn hen ffasiwn.

Dwi wedi siomi nac ydych wedi cynnwys unrhywbeth am feicio neu am ail agor twnel Blaencwm i feicwyr. Mae gan y Sir siawns wych o fod yn fyd enwog ar gyfer beicio, i unigolion neu i deuluoedd ac mae angen Unique Selling Point arnoch er mwyn denu ymwelwyr fydd yn siopa, bwyta ac ymweld â llefydd eraill unwaith yn y cwm.

57

I think it is important to rejuvenate the area and invest to bring jobs and keep young people in the valleys which brings life. It would be important to ensure that locals are not forgotten for the sake of making money from visitors, rather that it is is a boost to the economy, jobs and skills.
Any jobs created should focus intensely on customer service. Young people need to be energetic and happy to engage with people. And if someone complains then say 'sorry'. Most people employed today have no idea how to deal with a genuine complaint.
Please work with existing community leaders, anchor organisations (including local sports/charities) Use the talent, resource, experience etc that RCT already has - it's people. Go to them first before agreeing deals based on facts and figures.
To help with accommodation the inclusion of overnight parking for self contained motorhomes (no facilities required other than a flat space but water and waste water disposal a bonus) would be very advantageous. This form of provision is very popular ans sucessful across Europe and Scotland but very limited in South Wales.
Just - do not forget people who live here. We need good access to services and facilities (e.g. housing), and should be able to afford to live here if we choose. Perhaps paid-for attractions could have days / offers where locals pay a reduced fee so they can also enjoy the attractions (e.f. the cost of the Tower Zip is prohibitive for many).
No
Just looking forward to the investment and for people to stop seeing the valleys as deprived and to be avoided!
They are building houses ,the policy is to make the area a suburb and have Leisure facilities to appease residents . No intention of creating well paid employment
No.
Needs to focus on environmental issues. Projects that are carbon neutral or offset overall. Projects that improve the ecology of RCT not just the economy!
Building relationships with businesses within RCT.
RCT has the potential to be a premier destination and with further resources poured into the area I believe it will have the infrastructure to do so, but it is important to consider local people in the process to make sure they benefit from this growth and are not hindered in any way
Well done-

58

Welsh language should be promoted: visitors are fascinated by bilingual signs Fly-tipping along railway route, especially Treforest – Pontyridd & outside Porth/Dinas stations must be removed before electrification begins: it's an eyesore & speaks volumes about the attitude of the area   Reinstatement of 150 Pontypridd-Gilfach Goch bus service would facilitate access to our more remote hillsides - offering views of the channel from Trebanog   Pigeon presence @ Pontypridd station needs to be removed, especially within the premises but also in underpass which links Graig-side platform to Sardis Road   Road junction of lower Trehafod needs traffic lights for buses turning right into Hopkinstown
Get the unemployed youth involved. Show them how they can be productive and take pride in they're country while inspiring others.
I have recently seen that the cycling trail in Trehafod Park is at risk of being destroyed - I believe this is a great resource that should be protected. Between the trails, cafe, lakes, and park area - it's a wonderful destination for families. In terms of the accommodation mentioned above - Trehafod park is also very close to both the Heritage Park Hotel and the Tŷ Gwyn B&B. It is also, of course, near to the Heritage Park Museum, so all in all a great little town for tourism.
It's a promising start, I just have severe doubts it will ever happen. These things never do
Investment in high skilled , high payed jobs is the only way to revitalise this area .
A bit short sighted. Again the landscape in RCT is fit for Green industry taking a huge step forward and being a eco tourism hub for the rest of the UK and world. Take advantage of our recycling credentials and go the extra mile to push small industry to become exactly what you want with tourism employment.
Get together with other districts - Caerphilly, NPT, Blaenau Gwent, Merthyr, Torfaen. They have much the same offering, and working together rather than in competition would be more effective. Joint offerings, joint publicity etc.
Would the RCT tourism strategy consider that opportunities could be created for disabled members of our communities.
Mae cyfle euraidd gennym nawr i newid bywydau pobl yr ardal am y gorau. Amser i'r diwydiannau trwm gadael y cwm a ffocysi ar ddatblygu sgiliau newydd yn ein pobl ifanc. Bydd y swyddi a'r arian gall dod i'r ardal o ddatblygu tiwristiaeth gwella safonau byw trigolion y Cymoedd mewn ffordd na wnaethpwyd o'r blaen.
aires

59

I think it's a good idea to increase tourism to Rhondda. A lot of work is needed to bring visitors in but I do see it could be beneficial. However, who that would be beneficial to I am dubious. It seems certain people in the valleys always get help and hand outs whilst the actual hardworking, people who work long hours to earn a decent wage, get penalised the most. I worked from home during the entire pandemic and did not ask for or get any help - but people in my category, the people who work long hours to actually be able to live, are never helped. The ''living wage'' idea is completely underestimated. You can earn £20K+ and basically be struggling to live. Yet we pay for everything we need or we go without when we can't afford it, as there's never any help - yet £20k+ doesn't go very far when you have a mortgage and bills. So it would actually be great to see any additional revenue from tourism actually go back into the real community for once, not just the people who essentially opt to earn less than a certain wage because they know they'll get benefits to take them to a much better wage.

Equalities:

NA
No comment.
It wouldn't affect me at all
None
Healthy living walking and cycling accessible
Strategy is fine. Disability access is not very good and being a deprived area Businesses have neither the Space or revenue to justify improving these , could there be grants available in future ? There are not enough Public toilets for tourists.
they should take into acount the person gender
Stop putting everything in Welsh it really puts off our English friends they find it demeaning!
Doesn't affect me
none known
Accessibility is a big factor with public transport links
irrelevant
You have successfully addressed disability with your accessibility at the Lido / Ponty Park ! Thank you !
N/A
N/a
Accessibility and a changing places toilet would be great for everyone
Prefer not to say
It wouldn't

60

Accommodation is often not accessible, parking and public transport options are a long way from tourist facilities. Pontypridd train station has awful access for disabled, as well as being an intimidating place for women, older & younger people, etc.
In no way whatsoever.
None at all.
Disabled
The surrounding facilities,
It may lead to a nicer living environment. My area is awful these days.
Bring ponty alive again
No
Don't know.
I think it is important that the Welsh language is promoted during this. For example, if there are going to be additional signs out up, they should have both English and Welsh on them.
N/A
No comment
Thank you for including the question. I have no particular comments.
NA
No impact
NA
None
NA
No
Mabye i can get into a relationship with a tourist 🤣
Needs to be bilingual - visitors from overseas are genuinely interested in the Welsh language
I cannot think of any reason that this strategy would affect me in anyway
It won't.
It doesn't
There are some areas of the UK I do not feel welcomed in as a Motorcaravan tourist. Height / weight restrictions in parking areas, campsites that provide more facilities than I require as Motorcaravans are self contained but I am expected to pay for facilities I don't need to use such as showers and toilets. Many campsites are grass and unsuitable for Motorcaravans, many won't allow me to book just one or two nights, many are in isolated places too far to walk to shops and other facilities. I feel the needs of the Motorcaravan tourist are overlooked and misunderstood by many areas in the UK.
None at all
Not applicable at this time.
NA except toilets... I am a biological woman & would NOT want to share space with self identified gender. I would feel unsafe.
No, currently pregnant but anything I couldn't participate in currently I would do intnhe future. Important to include Welsh language

61

Not at all.
Not at all.
It would not affect me
Not at all, provided the Welsh and English languages are displayed equally prominently.
If you could take away some off the hills to walk up, my knees would thank you immensely. But then again some of the best views are from the tops of your Welsh hills
It won't affect me.
It would not
It wouldn't
It will not
Need to be fully accessible - disabled partner.
As long as there are signs in English!
As a Welsh leaner I would like to see more use of the Welsh language in RCT, I feel this is another aspect of culture and heritage that visitors are often unaware of when visiting Wales and could give other UK residents and Europeans a wider understanding of its history.
Disability
No impact
no affects
Not at all!!
No effect, every venue, every attraction in the country should be accessible to everyone.
Disability: Ample accessible parking at attractions is important to me
It wouldn't
None
No
Na
i'm transgender, toilets are always a concern. gender neutral bathrooms should be important in all our tourism places.
N/a

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The language would receive a barrage of abuse and people who want to see it used more likewise. People always feel paranoid - that welsh speakers are talking about them. They seem to feel that welsh speakers should only use the language in secret - when there's no english speaker present to overhear the conversation. I find this bizarre but true. And belittlement is quite common unfortunately. This will only get worse.
Would not affect me unfairly.
Not applucanle
Safety needs to be improved for all groups and individuals within the RCT area.
A Man
It woukd not
If the strategy focused more on working with communities then it would be able to recognise where those with different characteristics could play more of a role. For example there is a strong lgbtq+ community here... is their voice represented in some of the thinking behind events which could encourage visitors?
Ensure any employment created is accessible, available and inclusive to all of the above
Nothing you just need to promote Welsh language better generally, and start b y offering classes that are free to all residents
I don't know . Access for disabled people needs to be improved for residence as well as parking. Frequently can push a prism in a pavement as car parked.
It doesn't affect me.
I would welcome all types of people or opportunities as long as it's positive and right for wales and the valleys
N/A
N/a
No impact
not applicable
You have listed the EA characteristics incorrectly. It's Sex not gender and Gender Reassignment not gender identity. If you can't get this correct then what else will you get wrong?
I am just straight and predominantly English speaking
Overall in a positive manner.
Welsh should be promoted and everyone included regardless of any differences
It wouldn't affect me.
Byddaf eisiau gweld llety, bwytai a staff yr adran twristiaeth yn gwisgo'r bathodyn iaith gwaith er mwyn dangos i ymwelwyr bod yr iaith Gymraeg yn fyw ac yn gryf yn y cymoedd.
would not affect me

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No effect as far as I am aware
It all should be included
Positively!
Disability ? Don't make me laugh , we have an Ablest Council and Council Leader . People are excluded not included
It doesn't affect me
N'A
Wouldnt
When I had a disability, it was tough commuting via Treforest station: no ramp access from university side. I am no longer disabled but empathise with passengers struggling with luggage, buggies, wheelchairs & shopping trolleys when crossing railway bridge. Pontypridd & Porth have ramps. As mentioned earlier: Trehafod railway station's main entrance has no ramp access - thus denying railway option to Heritage museum/hotel or local B&Bs for anyone who relies on wheels for mobility - or has bulky luggage for their visit.
Na
N/A.
It will make no difference , the structure in place now is appalling and will continue to be so
Infrastructure with all the signage can create more confusion to the community and visitors so clear communication and community consultation should be paramount for all parties to benefit. Bad use of this will make any of the above confused or frustrated.
N/A
Does not
* safety - being female there is always a security aspect to be concerned over. I love walking Clydach Lakes and you get to know local walkers. If we attract tourists to the lakes how exactly will we ensure walkers stay safe? As we know from recent events, women's safety is a matter we need to address. I would love to see some additional security measures up on the walk from the bottom lake to the top lake   * safety is a concern. If we attract tourists we need to ensure and additional people at places used by residents will remain safe. * it's already affecting disabled people ie the metal structures at Clydach lakes preventing wheelchair users and mobility scooter users from entering (I can't stress how appalled I am by seeing residents have to turn around because they can no longer access such a beautiful area of the Rhondda!!) No other concerns

Welsh:

NA
No comment.
Use both languages together
Bilingual
Encourage S4C to make programs in RCT.

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Make signs / tour guides / media bi-lingual and should be OK.
i belive that people should be speak welsh and it should be there choice if they want anything wrttern in welsh if the want it it has to be there choice
WEslh Language should be central to the offer as a distinct unique competitive advanatage. The offer should be inviting equally to a range of Welsh learners as well as welsh speakers and non welsh speakers. It should be positioned as a positive in the same way english speakers are not deterred from visiting France or Italy but view the language as very muich part of the holiday experience. This is brilliant opportunity and a way of really celebrating Welsh identity and taking it to the world
I don't know if it would have a positive or negative effect on Welsh language;   I would hope it can be positive to some degree by promoting Welsh culture and identity to enhance the experience and educate visitors to the area
Welsh language negative, of course it treats the English language less favourably,
Gives an opportunity to promote the Welsh language in the borough . I think using Welsh more would be beneficial to the tourism offering .
Every opportunity should be taken in delivering the objectives to promote the Welsh Language eg signage, bilingual tours, welsh history
Get the booking system on the lido so you can actually book it
Given the low level of Welsh language use in RCT I don't see tourism will make any difference.
As long as people use the Lido language is irrelevant
I would like to see more Welsh spoken bilingual guides and signage
Not sure
Ensure staff have access to learning Welsh language, use local Welsh language groups
It doesn't
As a non welsh speaker, I think its a positive to promote the language but not to impact on opportunities of non welsh speakers.
Tricky question. I am 70 years old, English and cannot speak or understand the Welsh language. I have lived here for almost 40 years and it has never been an issue.
No opinion
Not sure it matters
The surrounding facilities,
Better shopping centre big named shops. More people coming to rct towns not retail parks. Bring more money in. Stop people spending in cardiff
No comment.
Think climate emergency - we have to discourage driving to the area!!
Don't know

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I think that it can be far too easy to neglect the Welsh language when trying to attract English speaking visitors. I think there should be a balance between both languages and promote the use of welsh where appropriate.
I think the balance of English and Welsh is about right!
No comment
If the strategy is implemented mindfully then it could increase opportunities to promote Welsh and Welsh language learning. The usual bilingual signage etc helps. Promoting Welsh food and menus and local sourcing could help culturally too.
I think that the area has not got as strong a connection to the welsh language as the North. A lot of unnecessary money is spent on duplicating everything in Welsh.
NA
Welsh first on road signs is positively dangerous given that even amongst Welsh people the language isn't the main language.
None.
Ensure both languages are given equal priority.
Having new/old signs in both english and welsh Ensure a qualified welsh speaker is present at activities for communication difficulties
Promote the language throughout too. Weave it into all attractions including basic phrases at key attractions ... promote basic words and phrases at all opportunities. "Allow" people to learn at Every opportunity, including quick links to and leaflets containing more language info.
It would depend on wether the visitors are mainly welsh speaking or english speaking
Need to enhance availability of Welsh speaking staff members
Anything which promotes the Welsh language is to be applauded. Any opportunities to introduce visitors to the Welsh language and Welsh culture would be great. Having lived in Wales, and having Welsh-speaking family, I know that some visitors see the use of the Welsh language as some sort of barrier, failing to recognise that it is a living language and the first language of many residents. Providing information about the culture would be beneficial.
Sometimes people feel uncomfortable when people suddenly switch from one language to another in mid flow! It doesn't bother me but for older folks it may.
Good impact
I think Welsh signage in tandem with English is a splendid thing & would only promote the Welsh language.
Lots of people are learning Welsh currently, if possible in cooperate this to aid learning Welsh. For example sections on a poster or information leaflet easy phrases which relate or key words to help people understand and pick up the language better. It doesn't treat the English language less favourably.welsh language is part of our culture and it is important to try and bring it back as much as possible. We are proud to be welsh so we should embrace the language as well.

66

I am not a Welsh speaker, but I do like to see the two languages side by side, as a tourist it adds to the feeling of 'being away'. I also think that language is the strongest bond in the identity of a people, and would not like the use of the Welsh language to be 'dumbed down' in any way.
It could be an opportunity to introduce the Welsh language to English people. I'm English but know no Welsh though I speak French plus some Spanish and a little German!
The Welsh language is valuable and at a very basic level all road signage should have Welsh place names prioritised. In fact I would go as far as to say that English should even be dropped from town name signs. What better way to keep the language alive.
It would hopefully have positive effects on the acceptance and spread of the Welsh language, though English visitors will be difficult to convince of this!
Make sure you invest in towns as well as in attractions, as if a town looks tatty even the best looking attraction won't bring tourists in.
After living for some years in a country that had signs in a dual language (Canada) you need to strong encourage the Welsh language culture
It should be used in a positive and not derogatory way.
Most in the area speak English, in actual fact I believe that speaking the English language when one is welsh is often the problem. Not all Welsh people are welsh speaking, and to some extent are treated quite badly in some cases. However, promoting the welsh language in all age groups would help this, instead of trying to force it on Dooley. I am presently learning Welsh and feel it would be be appealing to visitors around the globe if it was spoken more in the area. But alienating those who don't speak or haven't had the opportunity to learn will impact upon this
It doesn't.
No comment
Use both!
As stated in question 7 I believe the strategy should positively impact and promote the Welsh language and its historical significance. It's language is Wales unique selling point, it differentiates us from the other parts of the UK, we need to weave this into our tourism industry to promote and develop Wales as a unique country with its own identity, culture, history and landscape.
if the council continue as they are, they are eradicating residents who cant speak welsh - policy discriminating people By not allowing disabled people to have a voice they are discriminating and not understanding the lived experience of the people here wo live the barriers daily - they need to be included and able to access funding to be part of this strategy.
Seems ok
no comment
There is no question that the approach would have a very positive affect on promoting Welsh heritage with visitors like us!

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Although I understand the push for Welsh as a language, I value Wales as a place more. Bringing tourism to the area and allowing people the opportunity to learn about our heritage and communities should be a priority over what language the toilet signs are.
Use of the Welsh language enhances the visitor experience, and raises awareness of the Welsh culture.
Fi'n hoffi'r ffaith bod y lido yn defnyddio'r y gymraeg ac gwneud ei caffi yn dwy ieithog. Efallai gall staff gwisgo bathodyn cymraeg i dangos bod nhw'n siarad yr iaith i cwsmeriaid. Hefyd os mae aelodau o staff yn defnyddio BSL, gall hyn fod yn hanfodol i cwsmeriaid gyda anghenion.
Non welsh speaker myself as are many of the local population
A positive would be to help those language with popular Welsh phrases and/history of an area! Well developed sports clubs are also a way of making improvements as lots of people visit for game days and when they see he starte of the clubs would not want to return !
I don't think the Welsh Language would be treated less favourably and I'm sure opportunities for those people whose native tongue is Welsh should be encouraged if they wish to speak the language.
The language mustn't be a hidden (disadvantageous they would think) part of coming to Wales. It needs to be presented as an interesting and exciting part of the visit.   Like visiting a foreign country only closer. eg You know you're getting closer, stone houses and slate roofs, reservoirs and rivers, unpronouncable place names, signs with too many consonants. Wales. I've arrived. Croeso i Gymru.
The welsh language and culture and the valleys close s needs to be promoted and retained to keep the appeal and unique S of the area. The opportunities must be shared out so all parts feel included and therefore ensuring it succeeded and we all take ownership. Please consider giving back to the mid and lower Cynon valley. Help value and level up these poorer areas by creating a 21st cwmury park land on the phurnacite land. Tourism for all!
I am English but went to Welsh-language classes when I lived in Wales and I think that the strategy will promote the use of the language.
Not sure although it's disappointing that Welsh isn't the first language of most of the residents of RCT

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Yr unig sylw fyddai parhau i sicrhau fod popeth o ran arwyddion gwybodaeth i'r cyhoedd yn ddwyieithog. Os ydych am hybu bobl i ymweld â RhCT mae rhaid cadw'r momentwm i fynd. Os yw'r eisteddfod gen yn mynd i ddal i ddod yma yna mae'n holl holl bwysig fod popeth sydd angen ei newid ac popeth newydd yn y ddwyiaith. Siomedig iawn oedd cerdded drwy farchnad Pontypridd yn ddiweddar. Gwn mai dim busnes y Cyngor ydy'r farchnad. Ond siomedig iawn oedd gweld arwyddion Saesneg yn unig yn yr ardaloedd sydd wedi cael gwedd newydd iddynt. Hefyd sylwaf fod Caffi Lido wedi ail agor. Gobeithio fod popeth yn y fan honno yn ddwyieithog..... Os na ac rydych am ddenu bobl i ddod i brofi y dyfroedd cynnes adeg yr Eisteddfod, byddwch yn sicir o gael sylwadau am ddiffyg y Gymraeg yn y caffi. Mae bobl yn fwy na pharod i fynd ar gyfryngau cymdeithasol i rannu eu profiad boed yn dda neu ddrwg. Da gobeithio. Peidiwch rhoi cyfle iddyn nhw. Bydd miloedd o gwmpas yn yr ardal adeg yr Eisteddfod ac gobeithio bydd ei gwaddol yn cael effaith cadarnhaol ar gyfer y dyfodol. Diolch
IF appropriate motorhome parking is available it would increase spending in the areas
Welsh is a strong attraction for tourism. Encouragement for the language and more support for learners would have positive effects.
You ignore the people's views , so is there a point to this
I find places where a lot of Welsh spoken a bit 'intimidating' and would like to see more opportunities to learn a bit more Welsh as I go round - maybe participating places such as bakers, butchers etc. could have English / Welsh for 'a loaf of bread please', '1lb of mince please', '2 of those please', 'thank you' etc. On boards along with phonetic pronunciation? Diolch
Welsh Language would definitely be a bonus. Opportunities here to reach out to those who are D/deaf Welsh Language users with signing, and also for those who are Neurodiverse, Physically Disabled and visually impaired.
Having just returned from a holiday in North Wales I can say I found the promotion of the Welsh language & culture there to be both fulsome and a unique selling point that was appreciated by visitors (English & Welsh alike) and definitely a positive!
Not sure
It would be good for people to use and promote the Welsh language in our towns
Welsh language has been proven to be of interest to tourists, and encourage visitation. It should be equal with English language use. Visitor marketing collateral should also be produced in international languages also
Needs to be given a high profile to negate against marginalisation.
Foreign visitors often expect us to speak Welsh and are interested in the language would be good to promote it where we can
I feel it could adversely affect us as visitors might find signs etc (especially road signs) confusing.

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I think this opportunity should enhance and grow people's love of wales and it's language
Besides signage in Welsh you might want to consider Welsh speaking guides at the tourist centres
You shouldn't treat either language less favourably in my opinion. The Welsh language is a 'nice' thing to promote, but not something that will attract visitors.
The Rhondda has historically wiped the language from it's people from the colonial era. Any notice to our language from the council is an improvement from its current state.
I am proud to be Welsh & have some knowledge of the language but it does irritate me that in a mainly English speaking area anything provided by Welsh government or local Council is always in Welsh first & somewhere in the middle we find it in English.
Pontypridd town centre is full of drug addicts & alcoholics. The hostels & probation office cause no end of problems for the police & public. Elderly people are avoiding the town. We need more shops & less flats especially the ones for people on benefits abusing the system!
Unknown
It may be an opportunity to promote the Welsh language, but needs to be done with care as most tourists will be non Welsh speaking, so will need easy access to information in English (or other languages).
No comment on this aspect
use Welsh at every opportunity
We should definitely promote the Welsh language. I think parking should permanently be free in our town centres.
I feel overall it would be poistive. Some negative things could include people not willing to promote the Welsh language. I do feel other languages may also need to be displayed to attract international travellers.
The Welsh language is a key part of the cultural identity of Wales and as such, businesses within the tourism and hospitality sector should be encouraged and supported to offer experiences and materials through the medium of Welsh.
It should be a positive opportunity to promote the Welsh language. Tourists often enjoy learning a few simple phrases when visiting somewhere new.
Galla'i os nad yw'r Gymraeg yn fwy canolog i'r strategaeth. Mae'r ffaith nad oes cyfeiriad at yr anthem na hybu'r defnydd o'r iaith yn od. Dim cyfeiriad chwaith at yr Eisteddfod Genedlaethol yn dod i'r ardal a'r gwaddol. Rhaid i ni hefyd fod yn well ar warchod ein treftadaeth. Gormod o lefydd hanesyddol yn cael eu dymchwel.
Dwi'n credu bod siawns yma i hybu y Gymraeg hyd yn oed os na fydd twristiaid eisiau siarad Cymraeg achos mae diddordeb mawr gan ymwelwyr yn yr iaith - cadarnhaol os mae'r iaith yn cael ei hybu a'i clodfori. Os nac ydy'r iaith ar gael i'w ddarllen neu siarad neu yn weladwy fydd hyn yn cael effaith negyddol iawn.
Continue to provide Welsh and English mediums for communications, signage and perhaps also more opportunities to educate locals and visitors about the Welsh language.

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| |
|---|
| Promotion of Welsh language should be included in the strategy. I don't see how this strategy could negatively impact on the Welsh language. |
| |
| |
| It could certainly be used to promote the Welsh language |
| |
| Many of the visitors will be non-Welsh speaking. While they may appreciate hearing / seeing the Welsh language, its use and promotion could have a negative impact. |
| Feel unable to comment |
| We are investing in Welsh Language School's only , English is a minority Education . We have a biased structure in place currently and it will exclude more in the future |
| |
| |
| I'm not a Welsh speaker, but the language must be celebrated and encouraged |
| Positive definitely |
| Ensure all tourist sites are bilingual and spaces for Welsh speaking communities are created. As a Welsh learner it would be great to access this information at tourist sites to help my language learning and for new spaces/sites to be created for the Welsh speaking community I can participate in |
| - |
| English language announcements either precede Welsh language or aren't fully duplicated on buses. Better on trains but not fully duplicated. |
| I personally don't speak Welsh and hope that English will be used more than Welsh. I don't like the push for the Welsh language. |
| The Welsh Language is strangling the English Language with the Policies of the Welsh Government . They are making it a minority |
| I did not see anything that really will encourage/spread the welsh language any further. |
| Mae angen sicrhau bod y Gymraeg yn weledol i bobl sy'n ymweld a bod Busnesau e.e yn hysbysu yn ddwyieithog. Dyle bod y cefnogaeth ariannol ar gael i ddatblygu hyn a ffocysi ar nwyddau, cynhyrchion, bwydydd lleol lle bynnag sy'n bosibl. |
| Not applicable. Not a Welsh speaker. However, I do agree with promoting the Welsh language, but do not have any suggestions |

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RHONDDA CYNON TAF

Tourism
Strategy

Croeso
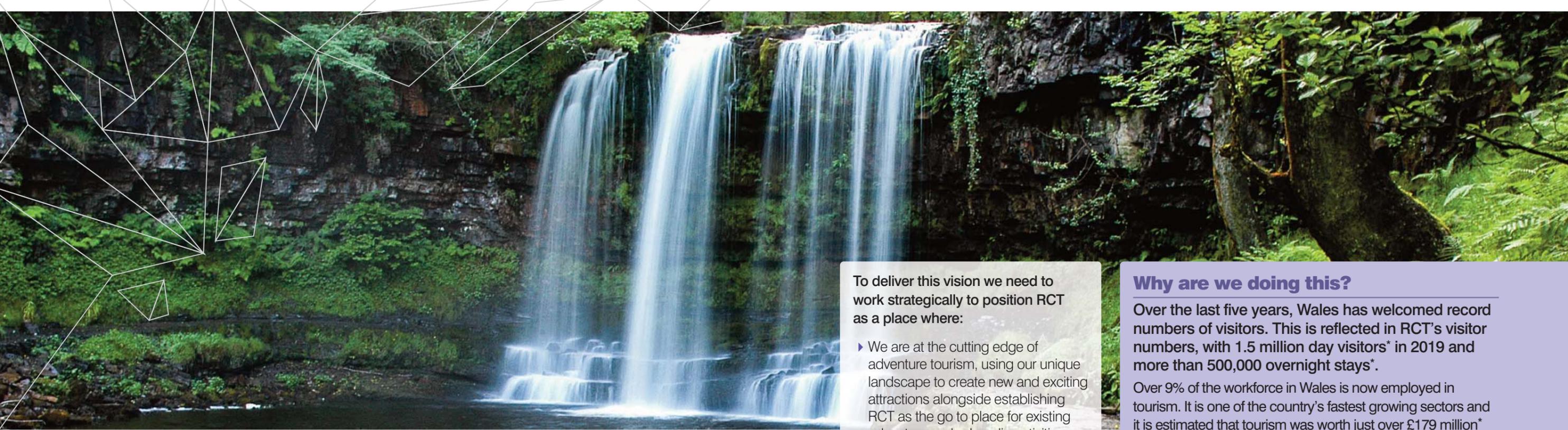
RHONDDA CYNON TAF

Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT) is renowned the world over for its pivotal role in the industrial revolution and we can still boast of a rich heritage and cultural history. However, now that the coal mines have gone, our landscape has returned to a breath-taking expanse of natural beauty that will rival any landscape in the country. The only difference between RCT's landscape and those that are already major tourism destinations is that ours is for the most part a secret!

The Council has ambitious plans for tourism and this strategy sets out to establish RCT as:

"The premier destination in the UK for "experience" based visits and vacations showcasing our first class landscape, culture and heritage."

Central to this vision is the strength of our natural landscape, culture and heritage. Our landscape is breath-taking and stands alongside any of the more tried and tested destinations in the UK and our social history and heritage assets tell a story of innovation, ingenuity and impassioned Valleys communities. These unique selling points provide a foundation on which this Strategy will build upon and enhance.

To deliver this vision we need to work strategically to position RCT as a place where:

▶ We are at the cutting edge of adventure tourism, using our unique landscape to create new and exciting attractions alongside establishing RCT as the go to place for existing adventure and adrenalin activities.

▶ We are the premier destination for all those seeking an active lifestyle, maximising the benefits of our outstanding landscapes.

▶ Our thriving culture and heritage is maximised to the full, benefiting residents and tourists alike.

▶ Our accommodation is not just a place to stay but is an experience in its own right.

▶ That the excellent food, drink, attractions and events that will be at the heart of our offer are locally provided and sourced.

▶ Our calendar has the very best in local and major events across all the arts and sports.

▶ That fundamentally, RCT is a destination with a sense of drama and place where the narrative of our pioneering past is reinvented to provide a first class, contemporary visitor experience.

Why are we doing this?

Over the last five years, Wales has welcomed record numbers of visitors. This is reflected in RCT's visitor numbers, with 1.5 million day visitors* in 2019 and more than 500,000 overnight stays*.

Over 9% of the workforce in Wales is now employed in tourism. It is one of the country's fastest growing sectors and it is estimated that tourism was worth just over £179 million* to the RCT economy in 2019 and employed more than 2,000 people*. It is clear that tourism has the potential to be the main driver of the local economy and source of employment in large parts of the County Borough.

What do we need to do?

Evidently the tourism industry is changing. People are moving away from traditional package holidays and instead are increasingly piecing together their own getaways, predominantly through the internet, seeking an 'experience' based break or holiday with the ubiquitous opportunity for a once in a lifetime selfie.

To maximise the opportunities that marrying our fantastic landscape and heritage with the changing face of tourism presents, this strategy recommends that we target our efforts in the following areas:

▶ **1.** Product & Attractions

▶ **2.** Accommodation

▶ **3.** Accessibility, Infrastructure & Connectivity

▶ **4.** Skills & Employment

▶ **5.** Experience

STEAM Summary 2019 RCTCBC, GTS (UK) Ltd

Cardiff Capital Region City Deal

Parc Rhanbarthol y Cymoedd

Valleys **Regional Park**

1 Product & Attractions

It is essential that we build upon our existing visitor products and attractions by developing new high quality destinations. The success of the RCT visitor economy depends upon having a number of high quality, unique visitor offerings, that can create itineraries and packages to provide short and long stay opportunities.

To fully realise our ambition of being the premier destination in the UK for "experience" based visits and vacations we need to develop a suite of strategic, nationally renowned attractions that will act as an anchor for our whole visitor offer. Attractions such as Zip World and the potential development of the Rhondda Tunnel are just what we need to bring people to the area from far and wide.

Our tourism offer will receive a massive boost through the development of the new Zip World Tower attraction at the former Tower Colliery site in Rhigos. However, it is critical that we guard against visitors solely using Zip World Tower and returning to where they came from without visiting and experiencing any other parts of our area, spending in our communities and boosting the local economy.

Visitor numbers to RCT are growing year on year but the vast majority that come are day visitors. To truly maximise the economic benefits to our communities of the tourism sector we need to create the conditions whereby those day visits are converted to overnight stays, overnight stays become weekend breaks and eventually RCT is established as a major destination for full blown holidays.

It is therefore critical that we establish a series of attractions that will encourage visitors to undertake multiple activities over more than one day. We already have a number of attractions in RCT that perform well, with the National Lido of Wales – Lido Ponty, a Welsh Coal Mining Experience at Rhondda Heritage Park, Royal Mint Experience and Penderyn Whisky Distillery all seeing strong visitor numbers. Whilst it is important to continue to support and develop these in the future, we also need to see additional attractions developed that will showcase our ambition to be a premier experience based destination.

These can take a range of forms. We can replicate attractions that we know are successful in other parts of the UK and Ireland such as Zip World and high wire rope bridges. We can maximise the untapped resources we already have such as developing the Rhondda Tunnel as the longest of its kind in Europe and the stunning reservoirs we have that are for the most part hidden from the public. It is also important that we find innovative products and attractions that will put us at the cutting edge of adventure based tourism and outdoor leisure.

Action plans will need to be produced to identify the areas where new attractions can be developed and where appropriate, work with sector leading providers to enable their delivery.

Alongside the delivery of these major attractions it is important that we maximise the benefit and use of our smaller scale assets such as Clydach Vale Lake and Nantgarw Chinaworks as they have a significant role to play in providing a complementary and additional offer alongside our major attractions.

Natural Resources Wales has also identified the need to encourage user access on its land, not only to connect local communities with their landscape as a part of the Active Travel and Health and Wellbeing agenda but also to encourage a guardianship presence in isolated forestry and rural environments. The opening of forestry routes presents significant opportunities for tourists to explore areas previously inaccessible to them and install infrastructure to service those visitors.
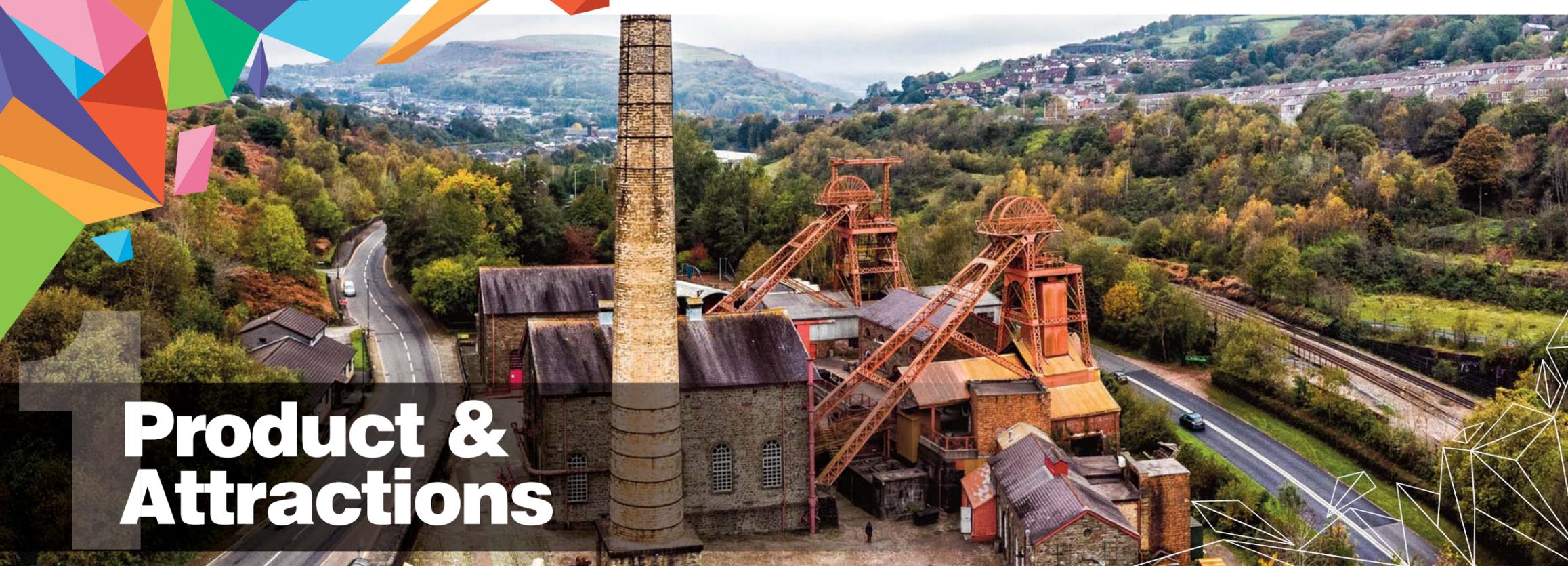
2 Accommodation

Our accommodation offer will range from high end boutique hotels to quality bunkhouses and caravanning facilities. To ensure we deliver on our ambition to significantly increase the amount of visitors that stay in RCT it is critical that we see an increase in the amount of accommodation available in the County Borough which needs to be of high quality, varied in nature and will also appeal to a wide range of visitors.

Based on current figures, RCT does not have enough bed spaces or accommodation available to satisfy the existing visitor numbers travelling to RCT. With projects such as Zip World Tower developing in the area, it is expected that visitor numbers will significantly increase and therefore the development of additional accommodation is vital to capitalise on the associated increased visitor spend.

There is an opportunity to provide a unique accommodation offer that is bespoke to the type of tourism and locations we are seeking to promote and develop. Adventure tourists appreciate the experience that quirky offers such as 'glamping' can provide and with the upward trend of motorhome usage including the rise of Airbnb in our area demonstrates that there is a demand for a range of self-catering accommodation. This provides an opportunity for a significant boost to the local economy in valleys communities as existing property is repurposed to meet an increasing visitor demand.

There are opportunities to explore the development of hotels that can service large numbers of tourists in key towns such as Pontypridd and towns like Aberdare can be increasingly recognised as a tourist town at the gateway to our 'adventure' landscape and the Brecon Beacons National Park.

The accommodation offer in RCT is growing and strengthening with existing hotels such as Llechwen Hall and Premier Inn expanding their capacity and new entrants to the market such as the high class boutique hotel at Lanelay Hall highlighting how successful a quality offer can be.

Funding opportunities are available through Valleys Regional Park and Visit Wales and these are helping to facilitate the improvements to the hotel accommodation at Dare Valley Country Park and the Cardiff Arms Bistro in Treorchy. However, it is important that this momentum is maintained and all opportunities for funding are maximised.

Accessibility, Infrastructure and Connectivity

The success of a tourism destination is reliant upon its infrastructure and connectivity. Transport links and public transport availability, car parking, signage, accessible facilities and understanding how they interconnect is vital to ensure a positive visitor experience.

RCT has good infrastructure and connectivity to the A470 (Cambrian Way), A465 and M4, enabling convenient links to Cardiff and Newport in the South, Swansea in the West and northwards through to the Midlands, travelling through some of the most scenic landscapes Wales has to offer. Destinations such as Bristol & Bath are within an hour and a half catchment of RCT and the A465 connects RCT to Abergavenny, Monmouth, and the Midlands positioning RCT favourably within the Cardiff Capital Region.

By 2022/23, connectivity into and within RCT will be significantly improved via the Metro and Valleys Lines Electrification. Transport for Wales have indicated benefits such as improved travel times, better commuter conditions and renovated station facilities. Dualling of the A465 will improve accessibility to the North Cynon Valley.

It also needs to be recognised that increases in visitors accessing RCT has the potential to lead to issues such as those now seen at places like Storey Arms in the Brecon Beacons where large numbers of visitors to Pen y Fan are having to park indiscriminately over the highway verges as parking infrastructure and public transport have not kept up.

It is important that strategic plans are developed identifying opportunities for new car parks to be provided to serve the new visitor attractions envisaged by this strategy and it will be increasingly important that the implementation of the South Wales Metro is maximised through an integrated transport offer that will encourage visitors to arrive by public transport and other low carbon means of travel.

Infrastructure to serve the needs of visitors should be developed including toilet facilities and the challenge of making heritage and adventure attractions accessible to all needs to be addressed in the development of our delivery plans.

Infrastructure that will deliver against the Council's carbon reduction ambition is vital and plans for innovative, "green" sustainable solutions for implementation and maintenance will need to be developed. Funding to support carbon neutral initiatives should be investigated to provide RCT with an opportunity to lead the way in green tourism innovation. There is an opportunity to pilot initiatives, such as carbon neutral places to stay, which intertwine carbon efficient measures and actions which protect biodiversity and manage eco systems effectively.

The role of digital infrastructure needs to be explored further with a view to placing RCT at the forefront of digitally connected destinations. The use of mobile technology should be investigated to enable an integrated booking platform allowing for the online booking of tickets, packages and itineraries through the RCT tourism website.

4 Skills & Employment

Improving the tourism economy in RCT means encouraging the development of tourism related skills and supporting the creation of well paid, secure jobs within the industry for local residents.

Welsh Government has identified tourism as one of the nine Priority Sectors which underpin the Economy of Wales and with tourism in RCT worth over £179 million* to the local economy, it is vital that communities become aware of the importance of capturing the benefits of increased visitors and local businesses develop skills which will benefit the customer service and tourism sectors. RCT Council's Corporate Plan 2020-2024, "Making a Difference" and "Our Cwm Taf", the Public Services Board Well-being Plan identifies the importance of developing the Tourism offer while supporting businesses within the region, and acknowledging that the strength in RCT's visitor offer stems from our local communities.

According to the Employer Skills Survey: 2019 Wales Data report, there were 1,100 vacancies within the Hotel & Restaurant sector in 2019 due to skill shortages. With the right training and support, significant opportunities will present themselves for local people and businesses to thrive in a vibrant tourism industry. Given the nature of the adventure, landscape based tourism offer that is likely to flourish there is potential for a wide range of hospitality roles and jobs to become available in the very places in RCT where employment opportunities have been most challenging.

As our tourism offer flourishes it is natural that a large proportion of visitors to RCT will be coming here for the first time, and their perception of our ex-coalfield communities and landscape may be prejudiced by outdated and stereotyped anecdotes. It is therefore critical that alongside a high quality physical and natural environment, the customer service they receive whilst they are here needs to be of the highest quality. It is paramount that hospitality jobs are not second rate jobs, and in order to provide the best customer and visitor experience possible we need people working in the sector to be well trained and valued.

As a unique selling point, there are opportunities to promote the use of the Welsh Language within the hospitality and accommodation sectors and provide Welsh Language skills to the local workforce.

Great work has already been undertaken within RCT to focus on skills development and job creation. Our Human Resources team supports local businesses by providing advice, guidance and signposting for workforce development. There is now an opportunity to develop this further with a specific focus on tourism related roles to maximise the benefit of new job roles coming into the sector such as those from outdoor activity attractions like Zip World Tower.

Working with partners such as Coleg y Cymoedd and The University of South Wales, there are opportunities to undertake work to identify skills shortages within the sector and develop courses which will provide the skills required by the industry and facilitate the development of home grown tourism entrepreneurs.

Many tourism attractions in the County Borough use volunteers and this is beneficial not only to the attraction itself but also to the volunteers, who can develop a skillset that can be taken forward into future employment. There are many social and wellbeing benefits to volunteering and opportunities should be investigated with third sector partners.

*STEAM Summary 2019 RCTCBC, GTS (UK) Ltd

5 Experience

The destination experience is at the heart of RCT tourism. RCT will provide a first class, positive and unique experience which visitors will want to repeat and tell others about.

Visitors are coming to the South Wales valleys and RCT in particular for its spectacular countryside and unique environment and we can build on this further, maximising the potential of adventure experiences with the Global Adventure Tourism Market Report 2020-2030 predicting a further 11% growth in adventure market globally by 2030.

It is possible for RCT to position itself as a premier visitor experience destination for adventure (both cultural and activity adventure tourism), outdoor, adrenaline and activity tourism, which will enhance our year round tourism offer.

We should develop experience based packages and itineraries covering all parts of the visitor experience (eating, drinking, doing and staying) and where appropriate maximise the benefits of cross boundary relationships and attractions.

In order to position RCT as a premier destination within the Valleys Regional Park a clear and distinct tourism brand should be developed to benefit the whole of the sector including attractions, accommodation, communities and local services. Establishing and developing the brand will rely heavily on partnership buy-in.

Plans should be developed to maximise the opportunities presented by emerging tourism themes such as Wellbeing Tourism which is already being identified as a lucrative market by accommodation providers such as Lanelay Hall. The potential of genealogy and packages which promote the Welsh Language and local culture should also be investigated.

There are clear opportunities to build on the strong programme of events in RCT and work with Visit Wales and Welsh Government's Major Events Unit to bring specialist and major events to RCT which in turn will introduce an increased number of visitors to the area.

The destination experience begins prior to a visitor getting to RCT. There are opportunities to re-brand and position RCT favourably online by providing a mechanism to book and plan a visit and itinerary before arriving. Redeveloping the tourism website to include initiatives such as interactive mapping and the ability to book tickets in theatres and attractions will help to co-ordinate the visitor offer and provide a hassle free, pre-visit experience.

Responding to visitor and resident requirements, the redevelopment of the tourism website for RCT will incorporate interactive mapping, e-commerce functionality and booking systems to improve the customer and visitor experience. Marketing campaigns targeting areas and demographics that are 'warm' to RCT will enable greater promotion to audiences that are interested in what RCT has to offer, and those visitors that are willing to travel and spend, with social media and digital marketing offering further opportunities to engage and interact with such groups.

Next Steps

The RCT Tourism Strategy is a partnership document and it is recommended that it should be delivered through the establishment of a RCT Strategic Steering Group in addition to the oversight from the Council's Scrutiny process and decision making by Cabinet. The Strategic Steering Group should be comprised of RCT Council representatives alongside major players from the Tourism Sector in RCT supplemented, where appropriate, by representatives from the wider industry.

RCT Council will be responsible for evaluating and reporting to the Strategic Steering Group on the Tourism Action Plan, organising meetings and amending or adapting this Strategy in the future. RCT Council will lead on tourism data collection and surveying to inform future STEAM reports and will ensure that economic data in relation to STEAM is shared with the Strategic Steering Group.

The Tourism Action Plan will be reported upon quarterly. The RCT Tourism Strategy and associated action plan will be reviewed annually with input from Scrutiny Committees and the Strategic Steering Group.

Strategaeth Dwristiaeth

RHONDDA CYNON TAF

Croeso

RHONDDA CYNON TAF

Mae Rhondda Cynon Taf (RhCT) yn enwog ledled y byd am ei rôl ganolog yn y chwyldro diwydiannol ac rydyn ni'n parhau i fod yn falch o'n treftadaeth gyfoethog a'n hanes diwylliannol. Fodd bynnag, nawr bod y pyllau glo wedi mynd, mae ein tirwedd wedi dychwelyd i ehangder harddwch naturiol syfrdanol sydd cystal ag unrhyw dirwedd yn y wlad. Yr unig wahaniaeth rhwng tirwedd RhCT a'r rheini sydd eisoes yn gyrchfannau twristiaeth mawr yw bod ein tirwedd ni ar y cyfan yn dal i fod yn gyfrinach!

Mae gan y Cyngor gynlluniau uchelgeisiol ar gyfer twristiaeth ac mae'r strategaeth yma'n ceisio sefydlu RhCT fel:

"Y prif gyrchfan yn y DU ar gyfer ymweliadau a gwyliau yn seiliedig ar "brofiad", gan arddangos ein tirwedd, diwylliant a'n treftadaeth o'r radd flaenaf."

Yn ganolog i'r weledigaeth yma mae cryfder ein tirwedd naturiol, ein diwylliant a'n treftadaeth. Mae ein tirwedd yn syfrdanol ac yn sefyll ochr yn ochr ag unrhyw un o gyrchfannau mwyaf poblogaidd y DU. Mae ein hanes cymdeithasol a'n hasedau treftadaeth yn adrodd stori am arloesedd, dyfeisgarwch a chymunedau angerddol y Cymoedd. Mae'r elfennau unigryw, cadarnhaol a deniadol yma'n gosod sail y bydd modd i'r Strategaeth yma adeiladu arnyn nhw a'u gwella.

Parc Rhanbarthol y Cymoedd

Valleys Regional Park

Er mwyn cyflawni'r weledigaeth yma mae angen i ni weithio'n strategol i osod RhCT fel rhywle lle mae'r canlynol yn wir:

▸ Rydyn ni ar flaen y gad o ran twristiaeth antur, gan ddefnyddio ein tirwedd unigryw i greu atyniadau newydd a chyffrous ochr yn ochr â sefydlu RhCT fel y lle amlwg i ymweld â hi ar gyfer gweithgareddau antur/adrenalin.

▸ Ni yw'r prif gyrchfan i bawb sy'n ceisio ffordd o fyw egnïol, gan wneud y mwyaf o fuddion ein tirweddau rhagorol.

▸ Rydyn ni'n gwneud y mwyaf o'n diwylliant a'n treftadaeth ffyniannus, a fydd o fudd i drigolion ac i dwristiaid.

▸ Nid lle i aros yn unig yw ein llety ond mae'n brofiad ynddo'i hun.

▸ Bydd y bwyd, diod, atyniadau ac achlysuron rhagorol a fydd wrth wraidd ein cynnig yn cael eu darparu a'u cyrchu'n lleol.

▸ Mae ein calendr yn llawn o'r achlysuron lleol gorau a'r achlysuron mawr ym myd y celfyddydau a chwaraeon.

▸ Yn y bôn, mae RhCT yn gyrchfan gydag ymdeimlad o ddrama ac mae'n rhywle lle mae straeon ein gorffennol arloesol yn cael eu hadfywio gan gynnig profiad cyfoes o'r radd flaenaf i ymwelwyr.

Pam rydyn ni'n gwneud hyn?

Dros y pum mlynedd diwethaf mae Cymru wedi croesawu'r nifer uchaf erioed o ymwelwyr. Caiff hyn ei adlewyrchu yn niferoedd ymwelwyr RhCT – cafwyd y nifer uchaf erioed o ymwelwyr* yn 2019, sef 1.5 miliwn o ymwelwyr yn ystod y dydd a thros 500,000 o arosiadau dros nos*.

Mae dros 9% o'r gweithlu yng Nghymru bellach yn cael ei gyflogi ym maes twristiaeth. Mae'n un o'r sectorau sy'n tyfu gyflymaf yn y wlad ac amcangyfrifir bod twristiaeth werth £179 miliwn* i economi RhCT yn 2019 ac wedi cyflogi dros 2000 o bobl. Mae'n amlwg bod gan dwristiaeth y potensial i fod yn brif ysgogydd yr economi leol ac yn ffynhonnell cyflogaeth mewn rhannau helaeth o'r Fwrdeistref Sirol.

Beth sydd angen i ni'i wneud?

Mae'n amlwg bod y diwydiant twristiaeth yn newid. Mae pobl yn symud i ffwrdd o wyliau parod traddodiadol ac yn lle hynny maen nhw'n mynd ati i greu eu gwyliau eu hunain fwyfwy, gan drefnu trwy'r rhyngrwyd yn bennaf. Maen nhw'n chwilio am wyliau yn seiliedig ar "brofiad" sy'n cynnig cyfle i gymryd hunlun unigryw.

Er mwyn gwneud y mwyaf o'r cyfleoedd sy'n codi wrth gyfuno ein tirwedd a'n treftadaeth wych ag wyneb newidiol twristiaeth, mae'r strategaeth yma'n argymell ein bod yn targedu ein hymdrechion yn y meysydd canlynol:

▸ **1.** Cynnyrch ac Atyniadau

▸ **2.** Llety

▸ **3.** Hygyrchedd, Seilwaith a Chysylltedd

▸ **4.** Cyflogaeth a Sgiliau

▸ **5.** Profiad

*STEAM Summary 2019 RCTCBC, GTS (UK) Ltd

1 Cynnyrch ac Atyniadau

Mae'n hanfodol ein bod ni'n adeiladu ar ein cynnyrch a'n hatyniadau presennol i ymwelwyr trwy ddatblygu cyrchfannau newydd o safon uchel. Mae llwyddiant 'economi ymwelwyr' RhCT yn dibynnnu ar fod â nifer fawr o gynigion safon uchel ac unigryw i ymwelwyr lle mae modd creu rhaglenni a phecynnau teithio ar gyfer arosiadau hir a byr.

Er mwyn gwireddu'n huchelgais o fod y prif gyrchfan yn y DU ar gyfer ymweliadau a gwyliau yn seiliedig ar "brofiad", mae angen i ni ddatblygu cyfres o atyniadau strategol sy'n adnabyddus yn genedlaethol. Rhain fydd yr angor i'r cynnig llawn sydd gyda ni i ymwelwyr. Atyniadau fel Zip World a datblygiad posibl Twnnel Cwm Rhondda yw'r union bethau sydd eu hangen arnon ni i ddenu pobl o bob cwr i'r ardal.

Bydd datblygiad yr atyniad newydd, Zip World Tower, ar hen safle Glofa'r Tŵr yn Rhigos yn rhoi hwb enfawr i'n cynnig twristiaeth. Serch hynny, mae'n hanfodol ein bod ni'n gwarchod rhag ymwelwyr sy'n defnyddio Zip World Tower yn unig ac yna'n dychwelyd adref heb ymweld ag unrhyw rannau eraill o'n hardal, heb wario arian yn ein cymunedau a rhoi hwb i'r economi leol.

Mae nifer y bobl sy'n ymweld â RhCT yn cynyddu bob blwyddyn ond mae'r mwyafrif helaeth sy'n dod yn ymweld am y dydd. Er mwyn sicrhau'r buddion economaidd mwyaf posibl i'n cymunedau yn y sector twristiaeth, mae angen i ni greu'r amodau lle mae'r ymweliadau dydd hynny yn cael eu troi'n arosiadau dros nos, a'r arosiadau dros nos yn troi'n wyliau penwythnos ac yn y pen draw, bydd RhCT yn cael ei sefydlu fel cyrchfan o bwys ar gyfer gwyliau llawn.

Mae'n hanfodol felly ein bod ni'n sefydlu cyfres o atyniadau a fydd yn annog ymwelwyr i ymgymryd â nifer o weithgareddau dros fwy nag un diwrnod. Mae eisoes gyda ni nifer o atyniadau yn RhCT sy'n cyflawni'n dda – mae Lido Cenedlaethol Cymru - Lido Ponty, Taith Pyllau Glo Cymru ym Mharc Treftadaeth Cwm Rhondda, Profiad y Bathdy Brenhinol a Distyllfa Wisgi Penderyn i gyd yn gweld niferoedd cadarn o ymwelwyr. Er ei bod yn bwysig parhau i gefnogi a datblygu'r rhain yn y dyfodol, mae angen hefyd i atyniadau ychwanegol gael eu datblygu a fydd yn arddangos ein huchelgais i fod yn brif gyrchfan sy'n seiliedig ar brofiad.

Gall y rhain fod ar sawl ffurf. Mae modd i ni efelychu atyniadau sy'n llwyddiannus mewn rhannau eraill o'r DU ac Iwerddon, megis Zip World a phontydd rhaff uchel. Mae modd i ni wneud y mwyaf o'r adnoddau sydd gyda ni eisoes megis datblygu Twnnel Cwm Rhondda fel y twnnel hiraf o'i fath yn Ewrop, a'r cronfeydd dŵr syfrdanol sydd gyda ni sydd, ar y cyfan, wedi'u cuddio rhag y cyhoedd. Mae hefyd yn bwysig ein bod ni'n dod o hyd i gynnyrch ac atyniadau arloesol a fydd yn ein rhoi ar flaen y gad ym maes twristiaeth antur a hamdden awyr agored.

Bydd angen llunio cynlluniau gweithredu i nodi'r meysydd lle mae modd datblygu atyniadau newydd a lle bo hynny'n briodol, gweithio gyda darparwyr sy'n arwain y sector fel bod modd eu cyflawni.

Yn ogystal â chyflawni'r atyniadau mawr yma, mae'n bwysig ein bod ni'n sicrhau'r budd a'r defnydd mwyaf posibl o'n hasedau ar raddfa lai, fel Llyn Cwm Clydach a Chrochendy Nantgarw, gan fod ganddyn nhw rôl sylweddol wrth ddarparu cynnig cyflenwol ac ychwanegol ochr yn ochr â'n prif atyniadau.

Mae Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru hefyd wedi nodi'r angen i annog mynediad i ddefnyddwyr ar ei dir, nid yn unig i gysylltu cymunedau lleol â'u tirwedd yn rhan o'r agenda Teithio Llesol ac Iechyd a Lles ond hefyd i annog presenoldeb gwarchodaeth mewn coedwigaeth ynysig ac amgylcheddau gwledig. Mae agor llwybrau coedwigaeth yn cyflwyno cyfleoedd sylweddol i dwristiaid archwilio ardaloedd a oedd gynt yn anhygyrch iddyn nhw, a chyfle i osod seilwaith i wasanaethu'r ymwelwyr hynny.
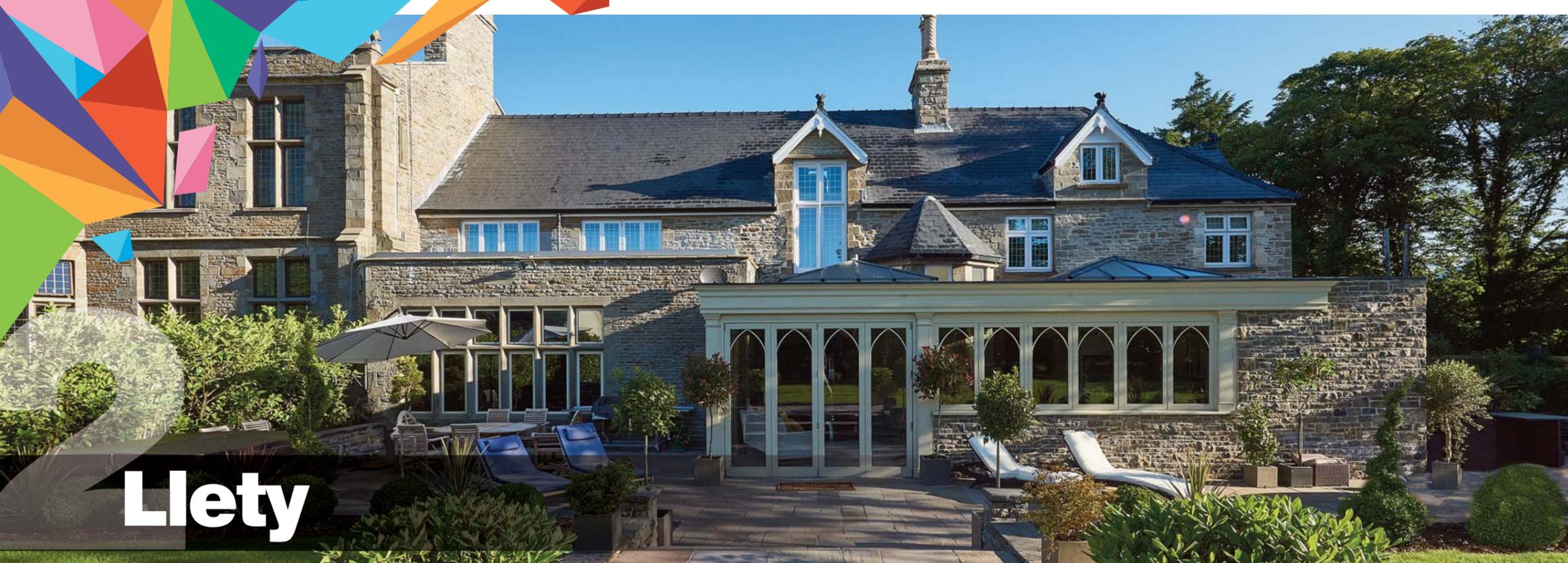
2 Llety

Bydd ein cynnig llety yn amrywio o westai boutique moethus i dai bynciau a chyfleusterau carafanio o safon. Er mwyn sicrhau ein bod ni'n cyflawni ein huchelgais i gynyddu nifer yr ymwelwyr sy'n aros yn RhCT yn sylweddol, mae'n hanfodol ein bod ni'n gweld cynnydd yn nifer y cyfleusterau llety sydd ar gael yn y Fwrdeistref Sirol. Mae angen i'r llety fod o safon uchel, yn amrywiol ei natur a fydd hefyd yn apelio at ystod eang o ymwelwyr.

Yn seiliedig ar y ffigurau cyfredol, does gan RhCT ddim digon o leoedd gwely na llety i fodloni nifer bresennol yr ymwelwyr sy'n teithio i RhCT. Gyda phrosiectau posibl fel Zip World Tower yn datblygu yn yr ardal, mae disgwyl y bydd nifer yr ymwelwyr yn cynyddu'n sylweddol ac felly mae datblygu llety ychwanegol yn hanfodol er mwyn manteisio ar y cynnydd cysylltiedig mewn gwariant.

Mae cyfle i ddarparu cynnig llety unigryw sydd wedi'i deilwra'n benodol i'r math o dwristiaeth a'r lleoliadau rydyn ni'n ceisio'u hyrwyddo a'u datblygu. Mae twristiaid antur yn gwerthfawrogi'r profiad y gall cynigion gwahanol fel 'glampio' ei ddarparu ac mae cynnydd yn y defnydd o gartrefi modur a llety 'Airbnb' yn ein hardal yn dangos bod galw am ystod o lety hunanddarpar. Dyma gyfle felly i'r economi leol yng nghymunedau'r cymoedd gael hwb sylweddol wrth i'r eiddo presennol gael ei addasu i ateb y galw cynyddol gan ymwelwyr.

Mae cyfleoedd i ystyried datblygu gwestai a all wasanaethu nifer fawr o dwristiaid mewn trefi allweddol fel Pontypridd. Mae modd hefyd cydnabod trefi fel Aberdâr yn dref dwristaidd wrth borth ein tirwedd 'antur' a Pharc Cenedlaethol Bannau Brycheiniog.

Mae'r cynnig llety yn RhCT yn cynyddu ac yn cryfhau wrth i westai presennol fel Neuadd Llechwen a'r Premier Inn ehangu eu capasiti ac wrth i newydd-ddyfodiaid i'r farchnad fel y gwesty boutique moethus yn Neuadd Glan-elái dynnu sylw at ba mor llwyddiannus y gall cynnig o safon fod.

Mae cyfleoedd cyllido ar gael trwy Barc Rhanbarthol y Cymoedd a Chroeso Cymru ac mae'r rhain yn helpu i hwyluso'r gwelliannau i'r cyfleusterau gwesty ym Mharc Gwledig Cwm Dâr a Cardiff Arms Bistro yn Nhreorci. Serch hynny, mae'n bwysig bod y momentwm yn cael ei gynnal a bod yr holl gyfleoedd i gael cyllid yn cael eu defnyddio i'r eithaf.

Hygyrchedd, Seilwaith a Chysylltedd

Mae llwyddiant cyrchfan twristiaeth yn dibynnu ar ei seilwaith a'i chysylltedd. Mae cysylltiadau trafnidiaeth ac argaeledd trafnidiaeth gyhoeddus, cyfleusterau parcio ceir, arwyddion, cyfleusterau hygyrch a deall sut maen nhw'n cydgysylltu yn hanfodol er mwyn sicrhau profiad cadarnhaol i ymwelwyr.

Mae gan RhCT seilwaith a chysylltedd da â'r A470 (Ffordd Cambrian), yr A465 a'r M4, sy'n cysylltu RhCT â Chaerdydd a Chasnewydd yn y De, Abertawe yn y Gorllewin a thua'r gogledd drwy Ganolbarth Lloegr, gan deithio trwy rai o'r tirweddau mwyaf hardd sydd gan Gymru i'w cynnig. Mae cyrchfannau fel Bryste a Chaerfaddon o fewn awr a hanner i ddalgylch RhCT ac mae'r A465 yn cysylltu RhCT â'r Fenni, Trefynwy, a Chanolbarth Lloegr. Mae hyn yn gosod RhCT yn ffafriol o fewn Prifddinas-Ranbarth Caerdydd.

Erbyn 2022/23, bydd cysylltedd i mewn i RhCT, ac o fewn RhCT ei hun, yn cael ei wella'n sylweddol trwy'r Metro a Thrydaneiddio Rheilffordd y Cymoedd. Mae Trafnidiaeth Cymru wedi nodi buddion fel amseroedd teithio gwell, amodau gwell i gymudwyr a chyfleusterau gorsaf wedi'u hadnewyddu. Bydd deuoli'r A465 yn gwella hygyrchedd i Ogledd Cwm Cynon.

Mae angen cydnabod hefyd bod gan y cynnydd yn nifer yr ymwelwyr sy'n dod i RhCT y potensial i arwain at faterion fel y rhai a welir bellach mewn lleoedd fel y Storey Arms ym Mannau Brycheiniog. Yma, mae nifer fawr o ymwelwyr â Phen y Fan yn gorfod parcio dros ymylon y briffordd gan nad yw seilwaith y cyfleusterau parcio a'r drafnidiaeth gyhoeddus bellach yn addas.

Mae'n bwysig bod cynlluniau strategol yn cael eu datblygu i nodi cyfleoedd i ddarparu meysydd parcio newydd i wasanaethu'r atyniadau newydd i ymwelwyr sy'n cael eu rhagweld gan y strategaeth yma. Bydd yn gynyddol bwysig bod Metro De Cymru yn cael ei ddefnyddio yn y ffordd orau bosibl gan gynnig trafnidiaeth integredig a fydd yn annog ymwelwyr i deithio ar drafnidiaeth gyhoeddus a defnyddio dulliau teithio carbon isel eraill.

Dylid datblygu seilwaith i wasanaethu anghenion ymwelwyr gan gynnwys cyfleusterau toiled. Mae angen mynd i'r afael hefyd â'r her o wneud atyniadau treftadaeth ac antur yn hygyrch i bawb wrth ddatblygu ein cynlluniau cyflawni.

Mae seilwaith a fydd yn cyflawni uchelgais lleihau carbon y Cyngor yn hanfodol a bydd angen datblygu, gweithredu a chynnal cynlluniau ar gyfer atebion cynaliadwy arloesol a "gwyrdd". Dylid ymchwilio i gyllid a fydd yn cefnogi mentrau carbon niwtral er mwyn rhoi cyfle i RhCT arwain y ffordd ym maes arloesedd twristiaeth werdd. Mae cyfle i dreialu mentrau, megis lleoedd i aros sy'n garbon niwtral, sy'n cydblethu mesurau a chamau gweithredu carbon effeithlon sy'n diogelu bioamrywiaeth ac yn rheoli systemau eco yn effeithiol.

Mae angen archwilio rôl seilwaith digidol ymhellach gyda'r bwriad o roi RhCT ar flaen y gad o ran cyrchfannau sydd wedi'u cysylltu'n ddigidol. Dylid ymchwilio i'r defnydd o dechnoleg symudol er mwyn galluogi platfform cadw lle integredig sy'n caniatáu trefnu tocynnau, pecynnau a theithlenni ar-lein trwy wefan dwristiaeth RhCT.

4 Sgiliau a Chyflogaeth

Er mwyn gwella'r economi twristiaeth yn RhCT mae angen annog datblygiad sgiliau sy'n gysylltiedig â thwristiaeth a rhoi cymorth i greu swyddi diogel â chyflog da yn y diwydiant ar gyfer trigolion lleol.

Mae Llywodraeth Cymru wedi nodi twristiaeth fel un o'r naw Sector Blaenoriaeth sy'n sail i Economi Cymru. Mae twristiaeth yn RhCT werth dros £179* miliwn i'r economi leol, ac felly mae'n hanfodol bod cymunedau'n dod yn effro i bwysigrwydd manteisio ar y buddion sydd i'w cael o nifer gynyddol o ymwelwyr, a bod busnesau lleol yn datblygu sgiliau a fydd o fudd i'r sectorau gwasanaethau i gwsmeriaid a thwristiaeth. Mae Cynllun Corfforaethol RhCT 2020-2024, "Gwneud Gwahaniaeth" ac "Ein Cwm Taf", sef Cynllun Llesiant y Bwrdd Gwasanaethau Cyhoeddus, yn nodi pwysigrwydd datblygu'r cynnig Twristiaeth gan fod yn gefn i fusnesau yn y rhanbarth, a chydnabod bod cryfder y cynnig i ymwelwyr yn RhCT yn deillio o'n cymunedau lleol.

Yn ôl adroddiad data Arolwg Sgiliau Cyflogwyr: 2019 Cymru, roedd 1,100 o swyddi gwag yn y sector Gwestai a Bwytai yn 2019 oherwydd prinder sgiliau. Gyda'r hyfforddiant a'r cymorth cywir, bydd cyfleoedd sylweddol yn cyflwyno'u hunain er mwyn i bobl a busnesau lleol ffynnu mewn diwydiant twristiaeth bywiog. O ystyried natur y cynnig twristiaeth sy'n seiliedig ar antur a thirwedd sy'n debygol o ffynnu, mae potensial i ystod eang o gyfleoedd a swyddi lletygarwch ddod ar gael yn yr union leoedd yn RhCT lle mae cyfleoedd am gyflogaeth wedi achosi'r her fwyaf.

Wrth i'n cynnig twristiaeth ffynnu mae'n naturiol y bydd cyfran fawr o'r sawl sy'n ymweld â RhCT yn dod yma am y tro cyntaf ac efallai y bydd eu canfyddiad o'n cymunedau a'n tirwedd o'r hen faes glo wedi'i ragfarnu gan straeon hen ffasiwn ac ystrydebol. Mae'n hanfodol felly, ochr yn ochr ag amgylchedd corfforol a naturiol o ansawdd uchel, bod angen i'r gwasanaeth i gwsmeriaid maen nhw'n ei dderbyn fod o'r ansawdd uchaf tra'u bod nhw yma. Mae'n hollbwysig nad yw swyddi lletygarwch yn swyddi israddol ac mae angen i bobl sy'n gweithio yn y sector gael eu hyfforddi a'u gwerthfawrogi'n dda er mwyn darparu'r profiad gorau posibl i gwsmeriaid ac ymwelwyr.

Fel pwynt gwerthu unigryw, mae cyfleoedd i hyrwyddo'r defnydd o'r Gymraeg yn y sectorau lletygarwch a llety a darparu sgiliau Cymraeg i'r gweithlu lleol.

STEAM Summary 2019 RCTCBC, GTS (UK) Ltd

Mae gwaith gwych eisoes wedi'i wneud o fewn RhCT i ganolbwyntio ar ddatblygu sgiliau a sefydlu swyddi. Mae ein carfan Adnoddau Dynol yn rhoi cymorth i fusnesau lleol trwy roi cyngor, arweiniad a dangos y ffordd o ran datblygu'r gweithlu. Mae cyfle i ddatblygu hyn ymhellach gyda ffocws penodol ar swyddi sy'n gysylltiedig â thwristiaeth er mwyn manteisio i'r eithaf ar y swyddi newydd sy'n dod i'r sector, fel y rhai yn yr atyniadau gweithgaredd awyr agored fel Zip World Tower.

Gan weithio gyda phartneriaid fel Coleg y Cymoedd a Phrifysgol De Cymru, mae cyfleoedd i ymgymryd â gwaith i nodi prinder sgiliau yn y sector a datblygu cyrsiau a fydd yn darparu'r sgiliau sy'n ofynnol gan y diwydiant ac yn hwyluso datblygiad entrepreneuriaid twristiaeth o'r ardal.

Mae llawer o atyniadau twristiaeth yn y Fwrdeistref Sirol yn defnyddio gwirfoddolwyr ac mae hyn yn fuddiol nid yn unig i'r atyniad ei hun ond hefyd i'r gwirfoddolwyr sy'n treulio amser mewn amgylchedd lle mae modd iddyn nhw ddatblygu sgiliau i'w defnyddio mewn cyflogaeth yn y dyfodol. Mae gan wirfoddoli nifer o fuddion cymdeithasol a buddion o ran lles, a dylid ymchwilio i gyfleoedd gyda phartneriaid yn y trydydd sector.
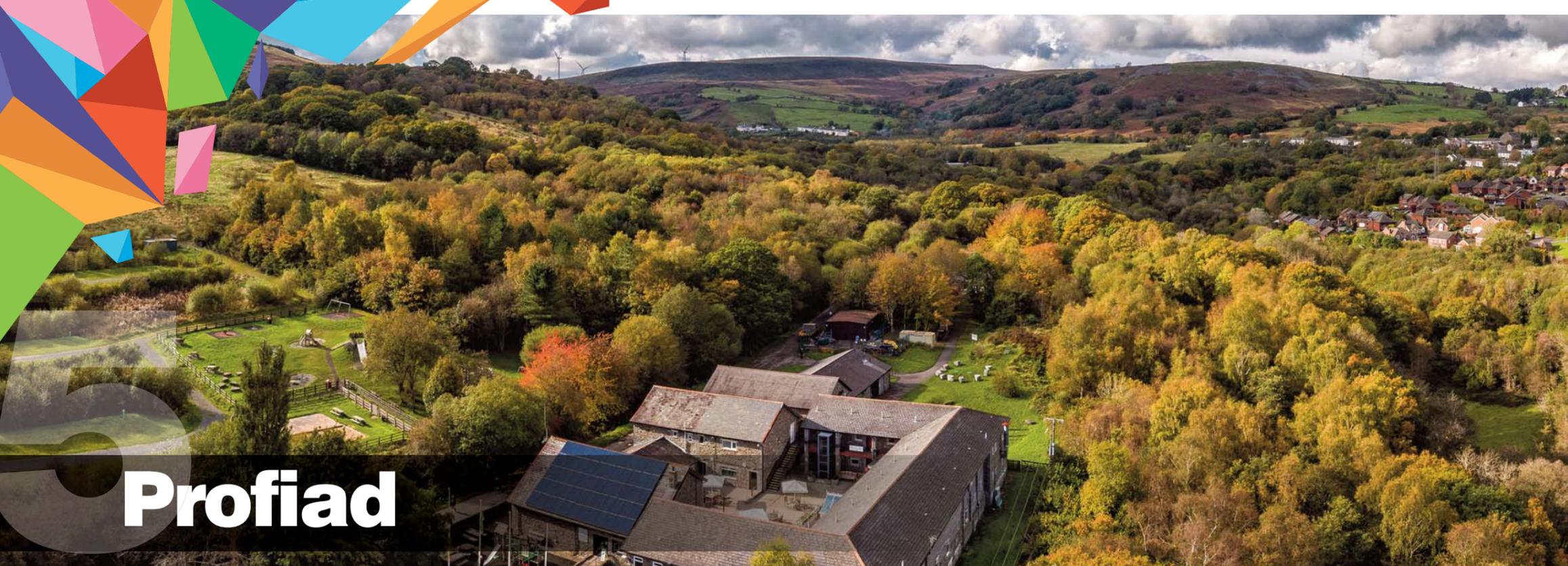
Profiad

Mae Profiad y Cyrchfan wrth wraidd twristiaeth RhCT. Bydd RhCT yn darparu profiad cadarnhaol, unigryw o'r radd flaenaf y bydd ymwelwyr am ei ailadrodd a dweud wrth eraill amdano.

Mae ymwelwyr yn dod i gymoedd De Cymru a RhCT yn benodol am eu cefn gwlad rhagorol a'i amgylchedd unigryw. Mae modd i ni adeiladu ar hyn ymhellach, gan wneud y mwyaf o botensial profiadau antur gan fod Adroddiad y Farchnad Dwristiaeth Antur Fyd-eang (2020-2030) yn rhagweld twf o 11% yn y farchnad antur yn fyd-eang erbyn 2030.

Mae'n bosibl i RhCT osod ei hun fel prif gyrchfan profiad ymwelwyr ar gyfer antur (gan gynnwys twristiaeth antur ddiwylliannol a gweithgareddau antur), twristiaeth awyr agored, adrenalin a gweithgareddau, a fydd yn gwella ein cynnig twristiaeth trwy gydol y flwyddyn.

Dylen ni ddatblygu pecynnau a rhaglenni teithio sy'n seiliedig ar brofiad a fydd yn bodloni pob rhan o brofiad yr ymwelydd (bwyta, yfed, gwneud ac aros) a lle bo'n berthnasol, manteisio i'r eithaf ar berthnasoedd ac atyniadau trawsffiniol.

Er mwyn gosod RhCT fel prif gyrchfan ym Mharc Rhanbarthol y Cymoedd, dylid datblygu brand twristiaeth clir ac unigryw er budd y sector cyfan gan gynnwys atyniadau, llety, cymunedau a gwasanaethau lleol. Bydd sefydlu'r brand a'i ddatblygu'n dibynnu'n fawr ar gyfranogiad gan bartneriaethau.

Dylai cynlluniau gael eu datblygu i wneud y mwyaf o'r cyfleoedd sy'n cael eu cyflwyno gan themâu twristiaeth sy'n dod i'r amlwg, fel Twristiaeth Llesiant sydd eisoes wedi'i nodi'n farchnad sy'n dwyn elw gan ddarparwyr llety fel Neuadd Glan-elái a darpar fusnesau fel Fferm Bryn Gobaith. Dylid hefyd ymchwilio i botensial hel achau a phecynnau sy'n hyrwyddo'r Gymraeg a'r diwylliant lleol.

Mae cyfleoedd amlwg i adeiladu ar y rhaglen gadarn o achlysuron yn RhCT gan weithio gyda Croeso Cymru ac Uned Digwyddiadau Mawr Llywodraeth Cymru er mwyn dod ag achlysuron arbenigol a mawr i RhCT. Bydd hyn yn ei dro yn cyflwyno nifer gynyddol o ymwelwyr i'r ardal.

Mae profiad y cyrchfan yn cychwyn cyn i ymwelydd gyrraedd RhCT. Mae cyfleoedd i ail-frandio a gosod RhCT yn ffafriol ar-lein trwy ddarparu mecanwaith i drefnu a chynllunio ymweliad a theithlen cyn cyrraedd. Bydd ailddatblygu'r wefan dwristiaeth i gynnwys swyddogaethau fel mapio rhyngweithiol a'r gallu i brynu tocynnau ar gyfer theatrau ac atyniadau yn helpu i gydlynu'r cynnig i ymwelwyr a fydd yn rhoi profiad didrafferth cyn iddyn nhw gyrraedd.

Gan ymateb i ofynion ymwelwyr a thrigolion, bydd ailddatblygu gwefan dwristiaeth RhCT yn cynnwys systemau mapio rhyngweithiol, swyddogaeth e-fasnach a systemau cadw lle i wella profiad y cwsmer a'r ymwelydd. Bydd marchata llefydd penodol i'r bobl gywir yn cynyddu'r ymwybyddiaeth o'r pethau yma ymhlith y bobl sydd â diddordeb yn yr hyn sydd gan RCT i'w gynnig yn ogystal â'r bobl hynny sy'n fodlon teithio a gwario. Yn ogystal â hynny, bydd y cyfryngau cymdeithasol a marchnata digidol yn cynnig rhagor o gyfleoedd i ymgysylltiau â'r grwpiau yma.

Y Camau Nesaf

Mae Strategaeth Dwristiaeth RhCT yn ddogfen bartneriaeth ac rydyn ni'n argymell y dylid ei chyflwyno trwy sefydlu Bwrdd Twristiaeth Strategol RhCT yn ogystal â goruchwyliaeth gan broses Craffu'r Cyngor a phenderfyniadau'n cael eu gwneud gan y Cabinet. Dylai'r Bwrdd Strategol gynnwys cynrychiolwyr o Gyngor RhCT yn ogystal â busnesau mawr o'r Sector Twristiaeth yn RhCT ac wedi'i ategu, lle bo hynny'n briodol, gan gynrychiolwyr o'r diwydiant ehangach.

Bydd Cyngor RhCT yn gyfrifol am werthuso ac adrodd i'r Grŵp Llywio Strategol, gan drefnu cyfarfodydd a diwygio neu addasu'r Strategaeth yma yn y dyfodol. Bydd Cyngor RhCT yn arwain ar y gwaith o gasglu data twristiaeth a'i arolygu i lywio adroddiadau Model Gweithgarwch Twristiaeth Economaidd Scarborough (STEAM) yn y dyfodol a bydd yn sicrhau bod data economaidd mewn perthynas â STEAM yn cael ei rannu gyda'r Grŵp Llywio Strategol.

Bydd adroddiadau ar y Cynllun Gweithredu Twristiaeth yn cael eu paratoi bob chwarter. Bydd Strategaeth Dwristiaeth RhCT a'r cynllun gweithredu cysylltiedig yn cael ei hadolygu'n flynyddol gyda mewnbwn gan Bwyllgorau Craffu a'r Grŵp Llywio Strategol.