



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

10TH FEBRUARY 2020

**PROPOSALS FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A MEMBERS STEERING
GROUP FOR THE PREPARATION OF THE REVISED LOCAL
DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

**JOINT REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROSPERITY AND
DEVELOPMENT AND SERVICE DIRECTOR DEMOCRATIC SERVICES &
COMMUNICATIONS**

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to firstly inform the Overview and Scrutiny Committee of the need to establish a Member's Steering Group to play a formal role in the preparation process of the Revised LDP. It is then necessary to initiate the required procedures to establish such a group.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:-

- 2.1 Establish a Member's Steering Group to play a formal role in the preparation of the Revised LDP. This would include to contribute to the initial identification of the vision, aims and objectives of the Plan, which will then feed into the preparation of the Preferred Strategy and ultimately the draft (Deposit) Revised LDP. The group was proposed in the Delivery Agreement for this revision process, which was agreed by full Council on the 27th November 2019. The draft terms of reference for this group are attached as Appendix 1 of this report, which will be subject to further consideration through the Overview and Scrutiny committee.
- 2.2 Submit their nominations for the membership of the Revised LDP Member's Steering Group to progress the work in coming months.

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Revised LDP Delivery Agreement, as agreed by Council, commits Rhondda Cynon Taf to prepare a revision of their LDP within a 3.5 year timescale, beginning in June 2020; subject to agreement by Welsh Government to proceed (to be sought in May). There is therefore a

need to ensure that the Members Steering Group is fully set up and informed of their role, prior to this formal commencement of the process. A fundamental element of the preparation of the LDP is to ensure participation by all necessary stakeholders in it. This would include, but not be limited to, Members, officers, the public, community groups, private developers/industry representatives and other specific consultee bodies e.g. NRW.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The Rhondda Cynon Taf LDP was adopted in 2011. The LDP sets out its aims, vision and objectives for the future of the County Borough, a spatial development strategy and a land use planning policy framework to enable its successful delivery. The LDP has formed the basis for decisions on new development in the County Borough, (excluding the area within the Brecon Beacons National Park) since 2011, with the plan having an end date of 2021.
- 4.2 The Council has reviewed the current Local Development Plan and concluded that a Revised LDP is required. This was due to a number of issues including significant changes in Legislation and Policy since the current plan was prepared and failure to deliver the allocations as expected. On the 27th November 2019, Full Council agreed to undertake the preparation of this Revised LDP, (subject to Welsh Government (WG) approval).
- 4.3 The proposed timescales for this process begins with submission of the Delivery Agreement to WG in May 2020, to secure their approval. Preparation of the aims, objectives and vision stages of the revision, along with the updating of necessary evidence base, will then begin in July. This will inform the Preferred Strategy that should be written for public consultation by August 2021. The subsequent detailed policies and site specific allocations will then be finalised to form the Deposit LDP for public consultation in July 2022. The third key stage is then its submission to WG, and the associated examination in public, led by an Independent Planning Inspector who determines if the Revised LDP is 'sound'.
- 4.4 As mentioned above, the LDP sets out a spatial development strategy for the County Borough, giving consideration to all existing social, economic and environmental factors. This 'Preferred Strategy' will seek to determine what levels of population and associated development growth are likely to be witnessed over the plan period to 2030 through analysis of updated evidence; or otherwise what aspirations are there for further growth? Moreover, it also sets out where this should most appropriately occur.
- 4.5 The LDP should then ensure that it is able to meet these needs, through incorporating appropriate policies and sufficient site specific

allocations. There should be further associated policies to allow for continued suitable development management decision making in RCT. The land use development themes that the LDP should therefore cover include the following;

- Housing,
- Industrial/Commercial,
- Retail,
- Highways,
- Transport,
- Minerals,
- Waste,
- Environmental,
- Ecological,
- Renewable energy,
- Open space,
- Leisure,
- Tourism,
- Climate change/Carbon Neutral (etc).

4.6 The Member's Steering Group has been proposed to guide and assist in the preparation and formulation of the Revised LDP, through the forthcoming Preferred Strategy and Deposit stages. It is intended to provide an effective mechanism for discussion and consultation between Members and LDP officers on these stages and content of the Plan.

4.7 The LDP revision process will incorporate a number of discussion groups, focus groups and workshop sessions in a bid to maximise engagement and ensure a community-led approach, as far as possible. The input of other groups and organisations will also be key to the success of the revised LDP. It will be the case that the Members Steering Group will also work alongside other identified groups under a broader LDP Forum, during specific preparatory stages of the plan, such as the Visioning events, etc.

4.8 The process is a revision of the current LDP, however, there have been significant changes in legislation and policy at national level, along with changing policy, agendas and priorities at Council level, since the preparation of the current Plan. For example, the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act, carbon neutral and climate change requirements and the evolving tourism sector in RCT will have an impact on the revised Plan. Equally, the annual monitoring of the current LDP has indicated that this Plan has not delivered as was expected, due in no small part to market and economic changes over the past decade. Again, these impacts need to be considered when revising the LDP. In particular, contributions from the Member's Steering Group on how these matters should be addressed in the revision is one of its key purposes.

- 4.9 It is proposed that the Overview and Scrutiny committee nominate members to the group and also appropriate numbers. This would be discussed and determined at the committee meeting. However, there clearly needs to be an appropriate cover of Members from all parts of the County Borough, whilst also taking into consideration existing Member committees and groups with responsibilities associated with the broad aims and objectives of an LDP. As indicated above, there are draft terms of reference for the proposed group attached as Appendix 1 of this report, which will be subject to further consideration through the Overview and Scrutiny committee.

5 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Equality or Diversity implications will be considered as part of the Working Group's recommendations and at subsequent implementation arrangements.

6. CONSULTATION

- 6.1 There are no consultation implications arising, as yet, from this report, however wider consultation with members not sitting on this Overview and Scrutiny committee may be required for their inclusion.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Financial and resource implications will be considered as part of the Steering Group's recommendations and any subsequent implementation arrangements.

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

- 8.1 The work undertaken by the proposed Revised LDP Member's Steering Group will allow for the preparation of the Revised LDP in a manner that further embraces the Corporate Plan, along with the wellbeing goals and five ways of working as identified within *WCFG Act*. 1.4.2. Preparation of the revised LDP will also include consideration of a host of guidance, policy and legislation emanating from the European, national, regional and local level. The revised LDP will also be guided by the aims and objectives set forth in the Cwm Taf Well-being Plan 2018-2023 entitled *Our Cwm Taf*. These are centred around having thriving communities, healthy people and a strong economy, with the cross cutting objective of tackling loneliness and isolation. The revised plan will also be influenced by the cultural, economic, environmental and social well-being goals and objectives within *Our Cwm Taf*, where they relate to land-use planning.