



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

13th FEBRUARY 2020

MAKING A DIFFERENCE THE COUNCIL'S DRAFT CORPORATE PLAN 2020-2024

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE IN DISCUSSION WITH THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL (COUNCILLOR ANDREW MORGAN)

AUTHOR: Chris Bradshaw: 01443 424026

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The purpose of the report is to set out a new draft Corporate Plan from 2020 – 2024. The draft Plan:

- Is informed by the priorities of residents, elected Members and staff through a comprehensive consultation over a 12 week period to 17th January 2020;
- Provides a vision for the County Borough in 2024, and sets out the Council's priorities and objectives it will focus upon over the following four years.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 2.1 Consider and challenge the draft Corporate Plan;
- 2.2 Note the feedback from the consultation process.
- 2.3 Subject to any changes required by Cabinet, present the draft Corporate Plan to Council at its meeting on 4th March 2020.

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 It is a key element of effective strategic and financial management for the Council to put in place a Corporate Plan to ensure that it:

- Is well placed to meet future challenges, particularly in the context of cuts to local authority funding, demographic changes in the demand for services and legislation changes;
- Has a clear strategy and set of priorities for future years; and

- Can use this Plan to allocate resources and ensure action plans are in place to deliver the agreed priorities.

4. **THE CORPORATE PLAN**

4.1 The draft Corporate Plan 2020-2024 set out in Appendix A seeks to set the overall direction for the Council over the coming four years, describing its vision, purpose and ambition as local authority for the County Borough.

4.2 The Council's proposed vision is:

“To be the best place in Wales to live, work and play, where people and businesses are independent, healthy, and prosperous”.

4.3 The Council's proposed purpose and the reason why it exists is: ***“To provide strong community leadership and create the environment for people and businesses to be independent, healthy and prosperous”.***

4.4 It is proposed that the Council is focused on the following three priorities:

1. Ensuring **People: are independent, healthy and successful;**
2. Creating **Places: where people are proud to live, work and play;**
3. Enabling **Prosperity: creating the opportunity for people and businesses to: be innovative; be entrepreneurial; and fulfil their potential and prosper.**

4.5 The new draft Corporate Plan will be a key part of the Council's budget and business planning process, and therefore it is essential that the draft Corporate Plan takes into account the fact that Rhondda Cynon Taf Council and the wider public sector continue to face significant financial challenges. Despite significant reductions to Government spending since 2010 and a return to economic growth, the financial environment for the Council, the wider public sector, and residents continues to be challenging. The position can be summarised as follows:

- Despite the new UK Government increasing its spending commitment for public services, for the first time for many years, pay and pensions costs are rising quickly. This negates the majority of the benefit of the increase in public sector funding.
- It is likely that over the next three years further spending cuts will be required, as the UK budget deficit still stands at around £40 billion or 2% of national GDP meaning that some form of austerity will continue.
- Increasing pressure on services: increasing demand on services is driven by a changing population. Rhondda Cynon Taf's population is

increasing but health and social services in particular are facing acute challenges due to the growth in older cohorts, as people live for longer.

- Wider financial pressure on households: from energy bills, housing costs, wage restraint, and benefit reforms.
- Increasing public expectations in terms of responding to climate change and the need to act, will require the Council to invest in ensuring its day to day activities become Carbon Neutral. This means that the Council must plan for the fact that this additional cost will not be met from simply doing more of what it is currently doing, but from making other difficult choices on what it does or does not provide.

4.6 Knowing that the Council continues to face significant financial challenges in the years ahead, it has a responsibility to develop and agree a plan for meeting the challenge.

4.7 Nevertheless, the economy locally is now growing, with the Cardiff Capital City Region one of the fastest growing areas outside of London. This creates opportunities for the Council; for residents; and for business. In Rhondda Cynon Taf, the benefits are already being seen through reduced unemployment, falling numbers of pupils eligible for free school meals, with more people on benefits moving into work.

4.8 The benefits of the new South Wales Metro should have a significant positive economic and social impact on many communities in Rhondda Cynon Taf, attracting more people and businesses to live and work in the County Borough.

5 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Areas of investment identified in the plan, as well as the consideration of tough decisions ahead, will be subject to Equalities Impact Assessments as subsequent budget proposals and other strategic decisions are brought forward during the course of the Plan.

6 CONSULTATION

6.1 The Overview & Scrutiny Committee pre-scrutinised the first draft of the new Corporate Plan on 23rd September 2019. There was a high level of debate amongst the Members which resulted in the draft Corporate Plan being amended to include a number of actions to be included within a number of the priority areas.

6.2 The draft Corporate Plan has been subject to a comprehensive community consultation exercise for 12 weeks from the 25th October 2019 to the 17th January 2020. The feedback from the consultation is set out in Appendix B. Council staff were also encouraged to feedback their thoughts on the draft Corporate Plan via the Council's intranet site.

- 6.3 The feedback from the consultation process was particularly positive with a clear mandate supporting the Council's Vision and the three priorities.
- 6.4 Consultees came forward with a number of excellent suggestions in respect of the actions they felt the Council should focus on operationally, such as local procurement, local employment, improvement in pay and conditions and improving our internal systems and processes. The Council already focuses on these issues through the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan and our HR Strategy, where we prioritise:
- Digitalisation
 - Commercialisation
 - Early Intervention and Prevention
 - Independence
 - Efficient and Effective Organisation.
- 6.5 Also the Council is a Foundation Living Wage Employer and each year we recruit approximately 50 apprentices and graduates from local colleges and universities.
- 6.6 The other key area of concern for residents was the environment and the need for a sense of urgency in respect of responding to Climate Change. The draft Corporate Plan includes a number of key actions to respond to Climate Change and over the next four years, we will see significant progress and actions being implemented as a result of the positive intervention of the Cabinet Climate Change Steering Group.
- 6.7 As a result of the feedback received, the draft Corporate Plan has had some drafting changes to incorporate the salient points raised.

7 FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

- 7.1 The draft Corporate Plan 2020-2024 will be set within the context of the budget setting process for 2020/21. Any investments set out in the Plan will be considered in the 2020/21 budget and subsequent Medium Term Financial proposals to ensure that spending priorities are aligned, where appropriate, with the Plan.

8 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The Cabinet has responsibility for the overall strategic direction of the Council and for formulating the Corporate Plan.

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

9.1 This report proposes a new set of corporate priorities and performance targets which will drive the work of the Council between 2020 and 2024.

9.2 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act focuses on improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The Act makes public bodies, such as the Council, think more about the long-term, work better with people and communities and each other, look to prevent problems and take a more joined-up approach. This helps us to create a Wales that we all want to live in, now and in the future. To make sure we are all working towards the same vision, the Act puts in place the following seven well-being goals:

1. **A prosperous Wales** - An innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.
2. **A resilient Wales** - A nation which maintains and enhances a bio-diverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change).
3. **A healthier Wales** - A society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.
4. **A more equal Wales** - A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio economic background and circumstances).
5. **A Wales of cohesive communities** - Attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities.
6. **A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language** - A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.
7. **A globally responsible Wales** - A nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being.

9.3 This draft Corporate Plan's vision, priorities and principles support the seven Well-being Goals. The Act requires the Council to set well-being objectives that maximise its contribution to achieving the well-being goals. In doing so, the Council will be expected to take all reasonable steps to meet those well-being objectives. It is proposed that the Well-

being objectives will be the three priorities set out in the draft Corporate Plan 2020-2024. This will be considered and determined by Council in March 2020.

10 CONCLUSION

- 10.1 The Cabinet are recommended to approve the draft Corporate Plan 2020-2024 and present it to full Council for consideration.

Other Information:-

Relevant Scrutiny Committee:

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Background Papers:

Draft Corporate Plan 2020-2024

Contact Officer

Chris Bradshaw – 01443 424026

Making A Difference

The Council's Corporate Plan 2020 – 2024 Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council

A message from the Leader of the Council

Rhondda Cynon Taf is a great place to live, work and play, and despite the continuing public sector austerity, the County Borough has great potential to become more prosperous and successful over the course of the next few years. We have already made a real difference. Over the past four years, the Council has delivered on its first Corporate Plan – The Way Forward 2016-2020, and has invested nearly £400m in priority areas such as:

- £170m - 21st Century Schools;
- £85m - Highways, Transportation and other infrastructure;
- £15m - parks, play areas, leisure centres and outdoor sports facilities; and
- £95m in regeneration of our town centres and community assets.

As we look to the future, we want to build on what we have achieved to date and make sure that every town and community in Rhondda Cynon Taf is a great place to live, work and play.

The pace of change in the world is fast, especially in the technology industry, so it is important that we keep up with the pace of change and make the most of the opportunities that come our way, such as technology that enables independent living. In doing so we will embrace change and be innovative in the way that we deliver services to residents. This new Corporate Plan sets out how we intend to continue to invest for the future.

Like all councils, we are continuing to face a difficult financial challenge. More and more people are needing our services, and there is also an increasing uncertainty about the levels of funding in the future. This means that we have had to make some tough decisions around where we prioritise and spend our resources. It has also presented us with opportunities to be innovative. We have had to think about alternative ways of working and more efficient means of delivering services to ensure that we retain the high standards of provision that residents expect. This includes ensuring that there is robust management of our budgets and our contracts, reducing our management and back office costs and ensuring we deliver value for money to the tax payer.

Careful long-term financial planning is key to ensuring that this approach remains successful. Over the past four years we have had the lowest cumulative increase in Council Tax across Wales and we will seek to ensure that Council Tax continues to be affordable over the next four years. The increases we have introduced are the minimum we need to balance the books and pay for essential services, such as safeguarding our older and younger residents. The budget consultation feedback supports this approach, and there will also be an opportunity to have your say on the level of Council Tax set each year. I am always grateful for the feedback we receive through the annual consultation exercise as it helps to inform us what areas you want to see the Council prioritise for the forthcoming year.

We always listen and look to respond to the outcomes. For 2019/20, the 3.6% rise in Council Tax that the Council approved is less than the 4.45% average increase that residents indicated they would be willing to pay to protect our services and well below the all-Wales average increase of 6.15%.

Despite the challenges, I am remaining ambitious and positive in my outlook for Rhondda Cynon Taf and the people that live and work here. Our plan sets out three main priorities and how we propose to deliver a series of corresponding commitments to achieve these.

Having a clean, pleasant and well-maintained environment remains at the top of the list. We know that efficient recycling and waste collections, welcoming green spaces, clean streets and well-maintained roads are some of the ways we can best support the quality of residents' daily lives. So we will continue to take tough action to tackle environmental crimes such as fly tipping, dog fouling and littering.

As we continue to work to reduce the day-to-day running costs of the Council to make savings, we are investing heavily in the future infrastructure of the County Borough. We have already set aside £170m to invest in building new schools, extra care homes, improvements to our roads and pavements, our green spaces, leisure centres, libraries and community buildings. We have already made good progress in enhancing our town centres to create the environment where businesses flourish and where people want to live, work and visit. Further investment is planned bringing jobs and homes into the town centres and opportunities for leisure and social activities.

The investment in the Council's infrastructure is likely to exceed £400m by the end of the four year period as new schemes come to fruition, and we maximise the benefits of the Welsh Government's investment in the South Wales Metro and Cardiff Capital Region City Deal investments.

Our ambition is for everyone to be as healthy, independent and prosperous as possible throughout their lives. Enabling access to a good education, developing skills and decent employment opportunities are all key priority areas. As we embrace the changes ahead, we remain absolutely committed to ensuring the effective safeguarding of our vulnerable children and adults. This commitment will not change. We will continue to seek to reduce the number of children looked after through early intervention and prevention and look for innovative ways to support our older population.

In the context of reducing budgets and growing demand pressures, the traditional role of the local authority as service deliverer is changing. Working with partners such as the police and health service is essential in tackling the complex and multi-faceted challenges facing our communities and core services. We will also see a different relationship with communities continuing

to emerge – one where we work together and both residents and businesses take a shared responsibility for themselves and the communities they live and work in. We are lucky to have strong business, voluntary, community and religious groups across RCT, and they will continue to play an important role in developing this new dynamic throughout the County Borough.

Our greatest challenge will be to deliver the Council's commitment to being "A net-zero Green House Gas Council by 2030" which is 20 years earlier than the recommendation of the UK Committee on Climate Change. This is a challenge we are taking seriously and we look forward to receiving the support from all local residents and businesses in working together to change the way we live our lives to achieve this aim.

I hope this Corporate Plan helps you to understand more about how the Council is approaching the challenges and opportunities over the next four years, and how we can work together for an even better Rhondda Cynon Taf.

Councillor Andrew Morgan
Leader of the Council

What we want to achieve

The Council's vision is:

“To be the best place in Wales to live, work and play, where people and businesses are independent, healthy, and prosperous.”

The Council's purpose and the reason why it exists is:

“To provide strong community leadership and create the environment for people and businesses to be independent, healthy and prosperous.”

The Council is committed to delivering three main priorities:

- Ensuring **People**: *are independent, healthy and successful;*
- Creating **Places**: *where people are proud to live, work and play;*
- Enabling **Prosperity**: *creating the opportunity for people and businesses to: be innovative; be entrepreneurial; and fulfil their potential and prosper.*

A set of key commitments that we will be focusing on sits underneath each core priority, including the detail of how we intend to deliver this. This doesn't aim to capture all that the Council does, rather it provides a framework to guide us.

The Council's three priorities – and our commitments:

People – Are independent, healthy and successful.

- **Supporting our residents who are older, vulnerable or who have disabilities, to remain independent and have a good quality of life - How we will deliver this:**
 - Opening new Extra Care schemes for people that need additional support to remain living independently;
 - Providing enablement services that help people regain or increase their independence;
 - Using technology to enhance independence and assist with care;
 - Offering support for carers;
 - Providing support and equipment that allows people to stay more independent at home;
 - Commissioning a range of community based provision to enable people to remain actively engaged within their community.
- **Encouraging all residents to lead active and healthy lifestyles and maintain their mental wellbeing - How we will deliver this:**

- Delivering new indoor and outdoor sporting facilities and enhancing existing sporting facilities such as changing rooms and outdoor play areas;
 - Ensuring participation in sport and physical activity is accessible and inclusive for all by maintaining low cost, high value provision;
 - Giving residents access to health and wellbeing information and activities through the GP referral schemes, and other health and wellbeing intervention programmes;
 - Increasing levels of engagement and participation in the arts and culture, whilst developing our theatres to become more inclusive and accessible to the whole community;
 - Continue to develop community hubs where residents have the opportunity to meet, socialise and access a range of Council and other services.
- **Integrating health and social care and providing support for those with mental health problems and complex needs – How we will deliver this:**
 - Working with the local Health Board and GPs to provide more health and care services closer to home;
 - Working with the NHS to achieve timely discharge from hospital for patients;
 - Offering, and signposting to prevention support for people to stay active and more independent in the community;
 - Continuing to offer support to working age adults with mental health needs
 - Introducing a social prescribing model for referring people to interventions in the community, including: exercise classes, adult education classes, Digital Fridays, Library reading clubs etc.
- **Improving services for children and young people and ensuring the needs of children are considered in everything we do - How we will deliver this:**
 - Seeking to reduce the number of children looked after through working with families to intervene early where issues arise with the focus on intervention and prevention to keep families safe together;
 - Improving the social, emotional and mental health and wellbeing of children and young people by increasing the range of specialist services available;

- Preventing young people from getting involved in violence, crime, exploitation and anti-social behaviour through a range of cultural, sporting and other forms of early engagement and intervention;
- Being a good corporate parent to children in care and care leavers, and supporting and involving them in securing the most suitable housing, employment, education or training provision;
- Working in partnership with Welsh Government, strive to reduce child poverty, providing services that encourage and build resilience of children and their families.

Places – Where people are proud to live, work and play.

- **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 – How we will deliver this:**
 - Supporting residents to reduce waste and increase recycling to 80% by working with residents and businesses on initiatives that promote waste minimisation and re-use materials;
 - Investing in technology to increase the amount of waste we recycle and reuse locally;
 - Working with residents, landlords and agents to improve recycling rates across all dwellings;
 - Working with residents and communities to reduce the number of incidents of littering, dog fouling, fly tipping and illegal parking, using enforcement powers as necessary;
 - Procuring a vehicle fleet that is fit for purpose yet has a limited impact on the environment;
 - Creating a circular approach to recycling and reusing waste material such as plastic at every opportunity. This will include developing the Eco Park at Bryn Pica;
 - Eliminating single use plastics and such as coffee cups across schools and other council facilities.
- **Keeping the County Borough moving, including improvements to roads and pavements and public transport, whilst also improving air quality – How we will deliver this:**
 - Continuing to improve the condition of our roads and pavements and investing in our bridges, retaining walls and sustainable flood drainage systems;
 - Encouraging the use of public transport through the development of the South Wales Metro, walking and cycling through an investment in active travel initiatives;

- Working with Welsh Government and the Regional Transport Authority to continue to improve access to public transport and explore opportunities to bringing back disused public transport, such as rail lines, for bus routes and active travel;
 - Exploring opportunities to develop a cycle network to major destinations in the County Borough without impeding main traffic routes;
 - Promoting and investing in the roll out of electric vehicle charging opportunities;
 - Using enforcement to increase compliance and support traffic to move smoothly and safely.
- **Ensuring the County Borough is one of the safest places in Wales, with high levels of community cohesion and where residents feel safe – How will we deliver this:**
 - Supporting the voluntary, community and faith sectors to help build active communities, creating the capacity for meeting the needs of residents within their communities;
 - Working with the police and Community Safety Partnership to prevent and deter anti-social behaviour and substance misuse in our towns;
 - Delivering a multi-agency response to all forms of violence and the criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults;
 - Preventing radicalisation and supporting victims of hate crime, including raising awareness.
- **Getting the best out of our parks by looking after and investing in our greenspaces – How we will deliver this:**
 - **Investing in the parks infrastructure, including playgrounds, pavements, seating areas and horticultural facilities, and developing masterplans for our major parks that will deliver significant improvements;**
 - Delivering natural carbon storage solutions such as those provided by trees, peat bogs, marshy grassland and other natural habitats across the County Borough to enhance air quality and reduce the impact of greenhouse gasses;
 - Offering community grants for creating greener space, encouraging community groups to invest in small and medium scale greening projects in urban locations across the County Borough;
 - Exploring opportunities to create and use our own green sustainable energy such as micro hydro-electric schemes which utilise natural river and water course features;

- Bringing cultural and sports events to our parks, such as the National Eisteddfod for Wales in 2022, and Glamorgan County Cricket to Ynysangharad Park to play T20 competitions, investing in the parks infrastructure to hold such significant events.

Prosperity – Creating the opportunity for people and businesses to: be innovative; be entrepreneurial; and fulfil their potential and prosper.

- **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; - How we will deliver this:**

- Supporting new businesses to open up in town centres and existing businesses to expand their offer through a wide package of financial support and interventions;
- Where the private sector is unable to tackle empty or rundown sites and premises in town centres, the Council will proactively acquire specific key strategic sites and, in partnership with Welsh Government, seek to develop suitable town centre solutions;
- 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 Experience, Royal Mint Experience, The National Lido for Wales and the Welsh Mining Experience at the Rhondda Heritage Park. We 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;
- Continuing to keep town car park charges to a minimum and make it easier for shoppers to visit town centres using public transport or active travel.
- Supporting local small and medium sized businesses to supply goods and services to the Council and to recruit the best local talent available into a range of roles from apprenticeships and graduates to leadership positions.

- **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; - How we will deliver this:**

- The new Local Development Plan will consider a radically different approach to mobility – to create a socially just, zero-carbon mobility plan. This shifts mobility away from the car by eliminating the conditions that make cars necessary. For example, by 2030, we need to ensure that half of all journeys will need to be taken by bus, bike or walking. All remaining journeys will be via electric vehicles.

- Develop town Centre strategies for our principal town centres, which values the uniqueness of each town, whilst building on the benefits of the Metro and including new office accommodation to increase town centre employment, and homes above shops to create footfall in the towns;
 - The delivery of major road schemes such as the dualling of the A4119, the Cross Valley Link, the Llanharan By-Pass and the A465 Cynon Valley link road;
 - An investment in a number of Park and Ride facilities across the County Borough at key strategic Metro sites, including JN34 of the M4;
 - Ensuring all homes and businesses have at least access to superfast connectivity, with all key industrial and commercial hubs having access to ultrafast connectivity;
 - The Council will lead on the master planning of the new settlement at Llanillid and the connectivity with the M4 and existing rail connections;
 - Supporting housing developers to bring forward major housing developments on former brownfield sites, such as former Cwm Coking Works in Beddau and the former Phurnacite Works in Aberaman.
- **Ensuring we have good schools so all children have access to a great education; - How we will deliver this:**
 - Improving pupils' achievement and narrowing the attainment gap;
 - Improving outcomes for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities;
 - Supporting children to have the best start in life and be ready for learning through an improved early years' system and childcare offer;
 - Investing in new and replacement 21st Century Schools, whilst also meeting the demand for Welsh language provision throughout the County Borough;
 - Supporting schools to successfully introduce and embed the new curriculum, raising the standards of educational performance for all pupils;
 - Supporting pupils to understand the world of work and access good careers advice and guidance.
- **Increase the number of quality homes available and affordable to provide greater housing choice for residents; - How we will deliver this:**

- Increase the land supply for new sustainable, low carbon homes through an updated Local Development Plan or Strategic Development Plan from 2021;
 - Ensure that new housing and commercial developments include solar, where feasible, and have the capability to generate, store and use renewable energy onsite;
 - Support small and medium sized house builders to develop new housing through access to the City Deal Housing Investment Fund;
 - Provide a comprehensive self-build homes support service, including mortgages, for local people to build new homes on Council owned sites (“Plot Shop” Scheme);
 - Continue to build Extra Care and specially adapted homes for elderly and vulnerable residents, develop innovative housing solutions for younger people in need, and provide suitable housing solutions for the homeless;
 - Continue to bring back empty properties back into use through a range of interventions and support;
 - Continue to support responsible local landlords and agents to ensure we have a good quality, affordable private rented sector. We will maintain our targeted enforcement approach against bad landlords and unsafe rented housing maximising the Council’s regulatory intervention powers to improve housing conditions.
- **Helping people into work and better paid employment – How we will deliver this:**
 - Working with partners to provide employment support, utilising remaining European Funding;
 - Offering employment schemes and apprenticeships in the Council, on the regeneration sites, and through other Council contractors;
 - Offering specific support to help people find work such as care leavers, people with disabilities and Universal Credit claimants;
 - Promoting apprenticeships across the County Borough, and supporting businesses to make use of the apprenticeship levy.
 - Continue to support working parents back into employment through the Welsh Government’s 30 Hours Childcare offer.

Our Approach

To achieve our vision, to make progress in delivering these priorities and respond to the significant financial challenges we continue to face, the Council has set out below how we will intend to deliver these priorities.

- **Live within our means:**
 - Delivering services that matter most by making decisions to prioritise our limited resources;
 - Providing value for money for the taxpayer and ensuring we are transparent in how we operate, maintaining low Council tax increases compared to other Welsh councils;
 - Taking every opportunity to reduce the Council's running costs;
 - Take the steps to further reduce the Council's carbon footprint to "Net Zero" through a sustainable approach to the procurement of energy, supplies and services;
 - Ensuring Council vehicles, commissioned home to school transport vehicles, bus operators and taxi vehicles are fit for purpose and are as environmentally friendly as possible.

- **Efficient and effective Council:**
 - Managing our finances and contracts robustly;
 - Providing residents and businesses with the assistance they need at the first point of contact and greater access to online services and support;
 - Treating residents equally, with understanding and respect, with all having access to quality services, whether they wish to engage with the Council in English or Welsh.

- **Maximising opportunities:**
 - Taking a commercial approach to generating income, and looking for new opportunities to generate revenue from our assets. This includes generating green energy for use in local buildings and homes;
 - Making use of digital and evolving technology and innovation to help us achieve better outcomes and become more efficient;
 - Capitalising on opportunities from Welsh Government, City Deal, or private sector investment growth and development to boost the local economy, creating local jobs through major initiatives, such as the Metro;

- **Shared responsibility:**
 - Working with residents and the community to share responsibility, helping communities to do more for themselves and give them more control over what they can do to support local people in their communities;

- Focusing on prevention and early help in local communities so residents can live independently for as long as possible;
- Working in partnership with other public sector providers to maximise the impact of our resources on improving public services.

In preparing this Corporate Plan, the Council continues to take account of the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

The Act focuses on improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing of Wales. It makes public bodies, such as the Council, think more about the long term, work better with people and communities and each other, look to prevent problems and take a more joined up approach. This will help us to create a Wales that we all want to live in, now and in the future. To make sure we are all working towards the same vision, the Act puts in place seven national Well-being Goals:

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

The Council's approach to the [Well-being of Future Generations Act](#) is to embed its requirements into the Council's business. The Priorities contained on this Corporate Plan also serve as the Council's Well-being Objectives.

This Corporate Plan sets out a vision, priorities and principles that continue to maximise the Council's contribution to the seven national Well-being goals. The national goals, together with the five Ways of Working, will continue to be incorporated into the detailed action plans that will deliver the Council's three priorities.

Appendix A

Examples of how the draft Corporate Plan could contribute to the seven national Well-being Goals currently include

National Well-being Goal	PEOPLE Are independent, healthy and successful	PLACES Where people are proud to live, work and play	PROSPERITY Creating the opportunity for people and businesses to: be innovative; be entrepreneurial; and fulfil their potential and prosper
Prosperous Wales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Early intervention with families to keep them families safe together.</i> • <i>Improving the social, emotional and mental health and wellbeing of children and young people by increasing the range of specialist services available.</i> • <i>Being a good corporate parent to children in care and care leavers.</i> • <i>Continuing to offer support to working age adults with mental health needs.</i> • <i>Offering specific support to help people find work such as care leavers, people with disabilities and Universal Credit claimants.</i> • <i>Continuing to support working parents back into employment through the Welsh Government's 30 Hours Childcare offer.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Keeping people and traffic moving on well-maintained roads and pavements.</i> • <i>Progressing schemes that will benefit communities now and in the future including improved public transport.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Providing opportunities for businesses to emerge and flourish.</i> • <i>Building new homes.</i> • <i>Creating opportunities for jobs.</i> • <i>Providing schools where all children can achieve the best they can.</i> • <i>Developing Tourism offer and supporting businesses to meet the needs of visitors.</i> • <i>Ensuring all homes and businesses have at least access to superfast connectivity, with all key industrial and commercial hubs having access to ultrafast connectivity.</i>

National Well-being Goal	PEOPLE Are independent, healthy and successful	PLACES Where people are proud to live, work and play	PROSPERITY Creating the opportunity for people and businesses to: be innovative; be entrepreneurial; and fulfil their potential and prosper
Resilient Wales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reducing site disturbance and material waste with shorter construction schedules. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investing in and valuing our Green Spaces Delivering natural carbon storage solutions such as those provided by trees, peat bogs, marshy grassland. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promoting biodiversity by protecting existing habitats where possible.
Healthier Wales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Helping people to stay as well as they can for as long as they can by encouraging increased activity. GP referral schemes, and other health and wellbeing intervention programmes. Offering and signposting to prevention support for people to stay active and more independent in the community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuing to tackle environmental crime. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investing in our playgrounds, leisure centres and community facilities in schools. Ensuring new housing and commercial developments have capacity to generate, store and use reusable energy Make it easier for shoppers to use public transport or active travel to our town centres.
More Equal Wales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Making sure that residents can access services, no matter what their background or circumstances. Social prescribing for referring people to interventions in the community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Making sure that our residents of all ages and abilities can enjoy our parks and green spaces. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing opportunities to all our residents to improve their digital skills. Keeping Car Park charges to a minimum.

National Well-being Goal	PEOPLE Are independent, healthy and successful	PLACES Where people are proud to live, work and play	PROSPERITY Creating the opportunity for people and businesses to: be innovative; be entrepreneurial; and fulfil their potential and prosper
Wales of Cohesive Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with the local Health Board and GPs to provide more health and care services closer to home. • Helping people to stay in their own homes for longer. • Providing Extra Care facilities for people that need additional support. • Working with residents and the community to share responsibility, helping communities to do more for themselves and give them more control over what they can do to support local people in their communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining a targeted enforcement approach against bad landlords and unsafe rented housing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring empty properties back to life. • Improving housing for all our residents and creating pleasant neighbourhoods in which communities can thrive. • Providing self-build home support service.

National Well-being Goal	PEOPLE Are independent, healthy and successful	PLACES Where people are proud to live, work and play	PROSPERITY Creating the opportunity for people and businesses to: be innovative; be entrepreneurial; and fulfil their potential and prosper
A Wales of Vibrant Culture & Welsh Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Increasing engagement and participation in the arts and culture and developing our theatres to become more inclusive and accessible to the whole community.</i> • <i>Preventing young people from getting involved in violence, crime, exploitation and anti-social behaviour through a range of cultural, sporting and other forms of early engagement and intervention</i> • <i>Providing more opportunities for our residents to communicate with the Council and each other in Welsh.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Cultural and sports events for all in our parks.</i> • <i>Progressing Plans for Eisteddfod.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Promoting RCT as a visitor destination.</i> • <i>Ensuring equal access to the Welsh Language across our services.</i>
Globally Responsible Wales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Home to school transport vehicles, bus operators and taxi vehicles are fit for purpose and are as environmentally friendly as possible.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A Council fleet that limits impact on environment.</i> • <i>Circular approach to recycling and reuse.</i> • <i>Eliminating single use plastics across the council and schools</i> • <i>Progressing the Eco Park in Bryn Pica.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Opportunities to create and use our own green sustainable energy such as micro hydro-electric schemes which utilise natural river and water course feature.</i> • <i>Increasing the supply of low carbon homes.</i>

APPENDIX B

The Council's Corporate Plan 2020-2024 Consultation Summary

1 Methodology

- 1.1 The consultation period ran for 12 weeks from the 25th October 2019 to the 17th January 2020.
- 1.2 The consultation ran alongside the annual budget consultation where appropriate to avoid duplication, for example the events and forums were used to engage on the budget as well as the corporate plan priorities.
- 1.3 A website was developed to outline the plan and priorities and allow people to provide their views online. The site included a short video outlining the proposals. 73 people responded online through the site.
<https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/GetInvolved/CorporatePlan/Home.aspx>
- 1.4 15 public face to face engagement events were held in venues and locations across Rhondda Cynon Taf (see table below). Members of the public were able to share their views on the priorities and suggestion any additions or general comments, which were noted. 189 people attended

Date	Event Location
Tuesday 26th November	Pontypridd Library
Tuesday 26th November	Llantrisant Leisure Centre
Wednesday 27th November	Porth Library
Thursday 28th November	Ferndale Hub
Thursday 28th November	Sobell Leisure Centre
Wednesday 4th December	Treorchy Co-op
Wednesday 4th December	Rhondda Sports Centre
Thursday 5th December	Abercynon Library
Friday 6th December	Aberdare TC
Tuesday 10th December	Hirwaun Library
Monday 9th December	Porth Morrisons

the
events.

Monday 9th December	Aberdare Sobell LC
Wednesday 11th December	Pontypridd TC
Wednesday 11th December	Disability Forum
Thursday 12th December	Llantrisant LC
Friday 13th December	Mountain Ash Hub

- 1.5 The consultation itself, the information video and the individual events were promoted via social media on Twitter and Facebook throughout the 12 week consultation period.
- 1.6 An email was sent to the Council's citizens' panel members as well as all Councillors, Town and Community Councils, partners through the Public Service board and local AMs and MPs.
- 1.7 A dedicated email address was set up and all written submissions were welcomed. A freepost address was also provided.
- 1.8 An involvement pack, with a template of questions, was prepared to allow community groups to engage with members of the community themselves.
- 1.9 We engaged with young people via a Youth Forum Event held in Pontypridd Rugby Club and filmed the feedback of some of the participants, answering a number of short questions about what it is like to live in RCT and what could be improved.
- 1.10 We attended the Council's Disability to have a discussion about the Corporate Plan and attendees filled in some short questionnaires and we once again obtained feedback through some short videos.

- 1.11 The 5 Older Persons Forums in RCT had a Health & Wellbeing event at the start of the consultation period and we set up a stand at the events, with some discussion boards to engage with people in attendance. We also filmed some of the feedback with a sample of volunteers. The Forums were also asked to disseminate the information and obtain feedback from their individual forum meetings, using the involvement pack mentioned above.
- 1.12 Staff were engaged via a global email to all staff and links to the consultation were placed on the Council's Intranet. 2 consultation events were held during staff training sessions, with 28 participants in attendance.
- 1.13 A press release on the proposals were sent to 3 local Welsh newspapers and an email was sent to a list of Welsh Stakeholders.
- 1.14 In total 367 participants contributed to the consultation.

Analysis

- 1.15 Following collection of the data, thematic content analysis was conducted on all responses to extract themes. In total, 868 references were analysed and figures have been weighted based on recent demographic data to provide an approximation of results in line with the current population in the County Borough. 16 main themes were identified, with respondents suggesting, areas of greatest importance to be Town Centres (369), Travel & Transport (322), the Environment (299) and Community (251).
- 1.16 A full breakdown and further detail of the identified themes within each priority is provided in Appendix A, while summaries for each individual group are provided at the end of their respective sections.

2 Summary of Views

- 2.1 As noted in the methodology, data was collected across a range of methods (i.e. public events, Council webpages, targeted forums and written submissions) to ensure that all viewpoints were represented within the report. This report provides a summary of the findings and selection of comments. The full list of comments will be made available to senior Officers to feed into the final Corporate Plan development.
- 2.2 From the data collected and the themes identified by respondents, we can conclude that the Council's Corporate Priorities were broadly found to sufficiently cover each of the proposed themes.
- 2.3 Overall the majority of people who attended the engagement events and responded online were positive about the priorities put forward in the Corporate Plan. In addition, people offered suggestions and outlined what was important to them and also discussed their local communities.

“Nothing to add to this, if this can be delivered....fantastic.”

“Fully support the plans put forward”

“These are definitely the right areas of focus for RCT.”

“A great plan that has the ability to drive it home. Work with the Welsh Government to attract new employers and job opportunities into the County Borough.”

“Agree with all of these”

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- 2.4 **Main priorities identified;**

- **Community (251)** - The community was seen as an important contributor to the people priority, including the importance of community Spirit in Rhondda Cynon Taf. There were references to the importance of socialising to **maintaining independence** and living a **healthy** life.

“The best thing, living there, is the community and what they do for the children and the people that live there.”

“The best thing about living in my area is that it is a great community to live in, where it’s full of friendly and caring people.”

- 2.5 Some comments suggested that the priority could also address a perceived Generational Gap (17).

“Shared spaces should include nurseries and the elderly, it’s been shown to have a positive impact on both in existing set ups”.

- 2.6 The Importance of Community Groups (65) was also emphasised in the responses, with calls for further funding and support identified.

- **Health (161)** – views predominantly focussed on the importance of Health Care Services (82) and Wellbeing (66). A perceived lack of availability of some services (39) and Accessibility to the services (26).

- 2.7 **Independence** was identified as a key theme (33) along with dealing with issues of Isolation and Loneliness (25). This was particularly the case expressed by older respondents and requests were made to support residents to live within their own homes and remain socially active, often being linked to other areas, such as public transport.

“I feel your People priority somehow needs to incorporate the wellbeing outcomes of the Social Services and Wellbeing Act. Social services play a huge part in meeting this priority and so much of what is done is focussed on supporting people to meet their own wellbeing outcomes. Wellbeing is more than independence, health and success - it’s about thriving in the way that matters to you”.

- **Council Communication/Engagement (165)** - A new theme to emerge from the data, was principally concerned with Inclusion/Engagement (88).

2.8 As part of the development of plans and priorities respondents suggested the need for further communication between the Council and resident groups, particularly in under-represented groups.

2.9 It was noted that the Council does engage well with a number of groups, such as the Older Person Forums and the Disability Forum and the Council was praised for its face to face approach at the engagement events and the ability to speak to a “person” about Council issues.

“Being with the forum has allowed me to get things fixed in my area. It’s allowed me to voice my opinions where before there was nobody listening”

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2.10 Main priorities identified;

- **Town Centres (369)** - Town centres were seen as a key priority for the Council, this included the need for continued **regeneration** (29) and the importance of dealing with **empty properties**.

“Make our town centres great places to live, work and socialise”

“Focus on town centres & focus on those with vacant units”

“Investing in town centres will bring more people and businesses in”

2.11 Under the places priority a number of comments were provided in support of **facilities** that contribute to a place where people are proud to live, work and play and there are cross overs with the health priority, especially in terms of the importance of leisure. This included fitness (90) and social (62) facilities, such as leisure centres and libraries.

2.12 There was some concern over the perceived insufficient numbers of Public Toilets (36) and Other Amenities (44), citing a lack of business diversity in towns.

- **Travel & Transport (322)** - Public Transport (205) was a key theme identified by respondents, however Parking (45) and Accessibility (35) were also deemed to be of significant importance. Within the Public Transport theme, Bus Times (40) were identified as the most pressing issue, with calls for extended services into the evening and early morning by some.

“Transport, to get to other family and friends, but also to health services. Good health services are also very important”

- **Environment (299)** – Another key priority was the environment, with the importance of **green spaces** identified (131) as well as street **cleanliness** (131), with **Sustainability** (28) also highlighted as an area that the Council should focus on.

“Yes – all of these are equally important. Recycling is key.”

“The environment we live in is now very clean and we have a lot of greenery around us.”

“The area now is quite green and it is quite clean on the whole. I just think that it’s a nice place to live.”

- 2.13 The comments on Sustainability, showed the increasing importance of both **Recycling** (8) and **Air Quality** (7).

“I am very happy that RCTCBC is prioritising green issues, I am thinking of buying an electric car. However there are not many publicly available charging stations in RCT. I think it would be a great idea if RCTCBC would install charging stations and maybe collect revenue from them to be used to fund other new green projects.”

- 2.14 The issue of **climate change** and how the Council could contribute was also mentioned.

“Do more within the Council to positively contribute to climate change. Implement internal policies that will have positive impacts on the environment, even in the smallest of ways”.

“I would like to see more emphasis given to Communities, from a social and responsibility point of view, starting with young people encouraging them to understand the impact we are all having on the world around us and encouraging them to care for their bright future and the Environment,

from a Climate Change point of view list above as I am very concerned and worried that we as a society are not giving this issue enough of a priority”.

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2.15 Main priorities identified;

- **Education (63)** – Unsurprisingly Schools was the main theme (57) and, in particular, the need to maintain high standards (26).

“education for the younger people, making sure schools are fit for purpose. We’re quite fortunate I think, where we are, that the local schools are quite good, but it is general that education has got to be a priority.”

“These are definitely the right areas of focus for RCT. One suggestion to add would that RCT values the importance of education in transforming lives of its young people and is ensuring that all its schools provide the very best education.”

- **Housing (51)** - Land use (25) and Affordable Housing (24) were the key housing themes. Concerns were raised over the development of new houses and affordable housing was seen as important.
- **Equality (31)** - were distributed between Resource Distribution (12), Equal Opportunities (9) and Support (9). The resource distribution relates to services being shared equally across the County Borough. References to Equal Opportunities (9) were predominantly general mentions supporting fair and equal treatment to all residents, those relating to Support (9) were more specific, with homelessness being suggested as a priority.

“Ensure resources are equally spread across Rhondda, Cynon & Taff”

Other Suggestions/Recommendations

2.16 In addition to the agreement with the proposed priorities respondents mentioned a number of themes/ideas that they thought the Council should include in the Corporate Plan, including;

- **Incorporate ‘Council Communication’ into the People priority:** Having received 52 references throughout the consultation, Council Communication could be included as a sub section within the People priority. This could outline how the Council plans to ensure that all residents receive information relevant to their individual needs and detail which media will be used to improve levels of inclusion and accessibility.
- **Make reference to ‘Council Operations’ within the Prosperity priority:** As both the largest employer and a key financial stakeholder within the local economy, residents have indicated that the Council should acknowledge its own performance in the Corporate Plan 2020-2024, beyond that of service delivery. This could include: improvements to funding, i.e. better co-operation with Welsh Government; advancement of internal processes, i.e. upgrading, integrating and streamlining systems; adoption of sustainable procurement, i.e. increasing local spend & recruitment; and improvement of working conditions, i.e. fair pay, promoting employee wellbeing & reviewing available opportunities for development.
- **Sub themes - ACEs, LGBTQ+ issues, gender equality and drop kerbs:** Though possibly addressed implicitly within the broader themes of the Council’s Corporate Plan draft, a number of sub themes emerged from the data that may warrant inclusion. These included more emphasis on: The prevention of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), greater support of LGBTQ+ issues within schools and the wider community, the addressing of gender equality issues (specifically period poverty), and the improved provision of dropped kerbs for mobility restricted residents.
- **Recognise the increasing importance of environmental issues:** While the current Corporate Plan draft makes reference to environmental sustainability across a variety of sections, evidence from the data would justify the inclusion of sustainability as its own distinct section under the ‘places’ priority. Though no one theme emerged as a matter of precedence, references to climate change, air quality, waste reduction, recycling, green initiatives, electric vehicles and environmental education were all recurrent throughout the data..

Overall

- 2.17 Overall, themes relating to Town Centres, Travel & Transport, Environment and Community were the most prevalent themes in the consultation, with Community and Education topping their respective priorities.
- 2.18 Reported themes within the **'People' priority** focussed on Community and Health, with respective themes of Community Spirit and Health Care Services referenced most frequently. Considerable interest was also given to Council communication, with levels of Inclusion/Engagement, methods of communication and Standards all addressed.
- 2.19 Common responses related to the **'Places' priority** included Town Centres and Travel & Transport and Environment. Town Facilities, i.e. Fitness and Social Leisure facilities, and Public Transport Bus Times emerged as key concerns for Town Centres and Travel & Transport respectively, while Environment themes were primarily focussed on Cleanliness and Green Spaces.
- 2.20 Responses for the **'Prosperity' Priority** centred on Education and Housing, with School Standards and strain on local Facilities the most frequently recorded sub themes. Further importance was given to the provision of Affordable Housing, while the availability of Local Jobs was among other common concerns.

3 Public Consultation Results

- 3.1 The public consultation used a qualitative approach with comments recorded. A total of 122 participants took part in the public consultation events, with a further 73 responses submitted via the Corporate Plan webpage.
- 3.2 From our discussions the majority of people who attended the events and responded online agreed with the Council's approach and priorities outlined in the Corporate Plan.

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- **Support & Social Care (13)** – this theme included the need for the Council to **support families and older people**. Free School Meals and **Early Intervention** were of most importance.
- **Health (12)** - Themes relating to Health were most frequently made in reference to **physical health**, specifically the importance of fitness incentives such as subsidised leisure memberships and outdoor fitness equipment. The importance of **Mental Health and Wellbeing** were also mentioned
- **Community (9)** – The role of the community was seen as important, specifically the need to involve Community Groups. Community Spirit was also mentioned along with the importance of community facilities.

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- **Travel & Transport (45)** - the public discussed the need for adequate **parking** and stressed the importance of **public transport** for work and for general travel.
- **Environment (35)** – Comments were focussed on Cleanliness (16) and Sustainability (9). The Sustainability references mentioned the importance of Recycling and the need for Council to consider Climate Change.

Other themes related to:

- Town Centres and highlighted the importance of local Facilities
- Parks and Play areas
- Community Safety and concerns of Anti-Social Behaviour.

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- **Employment (13)** - Local jobs were seen as a key consideration, however most responses from the general public related to Council employment.
- **Education (9)** - comments were about the importance of schools, particularly with regard to maintaining high Standards and improving career support. Further themes associated with equality encouraged more support for the homeless and those with additional learning needs.
- **Housing (8)** - The comments on housing focussed on the importance of having a good availability of affordable housing and a perceived local strain on resources caused by new housing developments.

4 Older Persons Consultation Results

- 4.1 Areas of greatest concern for older persons include **Travel & Transport, Health and Town Centres**.
- 4.2 **People:** Within the 'People' priority, Older Respondents focussed predominantly on areas of Health (22) and Community (18)
- 4.3 Of the themes relating to Health, respondents showed most interest in Health Care Services (9) and, in particular, the Availability (4) and Accessibility (3) of such services.
- 4.4 Considerable attention was also given to themes of Wellbeing (8), with specific regard to both Independence (4) and Isolation (3). Moreover, Physical Health (4) was prioritised over Mental Health (1), with the former exclusively relating to the provision of Fitness Incentives.
- 4.5 Among themes of Community, Older Respondents placed greatest emphasis on Community Spirit (9) and Community Groups (7). While references to Community Spirit were unspecific (6), identified from phrases such as 'Friendliness', 'Belonging' and 'Helpful Neighbours', direct reference was made toward addressing the Generational Gap (2):

- 4.6 **Places:** Older Persons showed considerable interest in all areas of the 'Places' priority, with Travel & Transport (26) and Town Centres (25) most frequently mentioned, followed by themes of Environment (15) and Safety (10).
- 4.7 References within the category of Travel & Transport referred primarily to Public Transport (22). While most instances were General (9), mentioning public transport as a priority without providing detail, particular attention was given to the extending of Bus Times (4), provision of Bus Shelter Facilities (3) and routes to Health Facilities (3):
- 4.8 Of responses relating to Town Centres, themes from Older Persons fell almost exclusively into the category of Facilities (23). Within this category, the majority of themes were distributed equally between Sports/Fitness Facilities (6) and Social Leisure Facilities (6), indicating a desire to remain active and socialise.
- 4.9 Environmental themes from older respondents related to the importance of Green Spaces (10) and Cleanliness (5).
- 4.10 **Prosperity:** Though least frequency referenced, Older Respondents showed a broad interest across matters relating to the 'Prosperity' priority, with particular emphasis on the categories of Housing (5) and Education (3).
- 4.11 **Summary:** Of most importance to Older Respondents were themes of Travel & Transport, Town Centres and Health. Prevalent themes included Public Transport, town Facilities and Health Care Services.

5 Younger Persons Consultation Results

- 5.1 Data collection for Younger Persons was conducted across 4 consultation events: 3 within Youth Clubs in each of the Rhondda, Cynon and Taf valleys respectively; and 1 during a County District Youth Forum.
- 5.2 The age of participants ranged from 11 to 17, with 41 people contributing in total. Following initial discussions, both recorded interviews and interactive poster exercises were utilised to collect data during the consultation event. 210 themes were recorded in total.
- 5.3 **People:** Themes within the 'People' priority were distributed relatively equally between the categories of Young People (28), Community (27) and Council Communication (24). These were followed distantly by Support & Social Care (2), with no reference made to the remaining categories.
- 5.4 Responses under the theme of Young People linked strongly to Youth Activities (27), youth Clubs (13) were a topic of particular interest which, along with Sports (6), were viewed as positive resources in their respective areas. Availability (6) however, was identified as an issue, with certain areas lacking access to such facilities:
- 5.5 Themes relating to Council Communication (24) largely referred to the Inclusion/Engagement (16) of Younger People. While the County Youth Forum and YEPS programmes were singled out as positive initiatives, Young Respondents felt that more could be done to communicate with them, with suggestions of School Boards and through Digital Means, such as: dedicated websites and social media.
- 5.6 **Places:** Within the 'Places' priority, Younger Persons most frequently referenced themes relating to Town Centres (56). While further attention was given to the categories of Environment (33) and Safety (21), Travel & Transport (8) received relatively little interest.
- 5.7 Responses relating to Town Centres (56) comprised two sub categories: Facilities (50) and Regeneration/Aesthetics (6). Of the former, Sports & Fitness Facilities (21) were most regularly cited, with skate parks, trampoline parks and astro/3G pitches among the most desired facilities. Retail Units (12) and Parks/Play Areas (8) followed as popular facilities.

5.8 Following Town Centres, themes of Environment (33) were most reported, with the majority of responses encompassed within the Cleanliness (22) and Green Spaces (9) categories.

5.9 References to Safety (21) related chiefly to Anti-Social Behaviour (11) and Street Lighting (4). Within Anti-Social Behaviour, issues of Substance Misuse (8) were of greatest concern to Young Respondents. Conversely, while noting the importance of safety, multiple respondents commended the low crime rate in their local area:

“Myself and my family feel safer in Pentre than we did in our old home town ... in Pentre we don’t see much graffiti.

5.10 **Prosperity:** Though sparsely referenced overall, ‘Prosperity’ responses from Younger Persons were dominated by Education (9). Of the themes relating to Education, most refer directly to Schools (8), with Bullying (1) and Career Support (1) mentioned among areas of importance.

5.11 **Summary:** Key considerations for Younger Persons aligned with the ‘Places’ priority and included references to Town Centres and Environment, with access to Sports/Leisure Facilities and Litter among important issues. Recorded themes for ‘People’ centred mainly on Young People and Community, specifically addressing Community Spirit and the availability of youth activities. Within the ‘Prosperity’ priority, Schools were most commonly frequently mentioned, with issued raised around Gender Equality.

6 Disabled Persons Consultation Results

6.1 Officers attended the County Borough's Disability Forum meeting to discuss the consultation and obtain feedback from members. To increase inclusion and accessibility, multiple methods of data collection were utilised within the Disability Forum. These included: a standardised pro forma for written submissions, group discussions and video recorded interviews. A total 54 themes were extracted from participant responses. 12 participants contributed in total.

6.2 The main areas of concern for members of this group included Environment and Transport with Community and Council Communication also emerging as areas of importance.

6.3 Within the '**People**' priority, Respondents at the Disability Forum focussed predominantly on Community (6) and Council Communication (6). Of great importance to respondents in this group was the idea of strong community links and friendships. Respondents felt that having a strong community was important to them and many identified the Disability Forum as a good opportunity to socialise and meet friends.

"I think, to be honest, it's a jolly good forum because it gets you out, it helps other people with the ideas and everything like that, doesn't it? You know, we have a jolly good chat, we have a laugh and everything is so interesting."

6.4 Council Communication and more specifically the methods of communication used were identified as areas of importance. Specifically related to members of the forum, ensuring that communication was adapted to suit all members was important as a way of residents having their voice heard. Support was given to the avenues such as the disability forum in providing a platform for disabled members to tackle issues that affect them.

"This forum is such a good forum for people that suffer from ailments like disabilities, they can have their say about the area and what is done in the area for disabled people."

6.5 **Places:** Members of the disability forum showed great interest in all the identified priorities in this area. Of the three priorities outlined as part of

the consultation 'Places' provided a great deal of the discussion at the event with Environment (14) and Travel & Transport (11) being identified as of great importance. Under the theme of Environment, important issues that arose from discussions showed that cleanliness (6) and green spaces (4) were of highest importance.

6.6 Within Travel and Transport particular importance was given to accessibility (4). In particular, members of the forum demonstrated the importance of dropped kerbs across the borough.

6.7 Public transport was seen as another important issue for the group with praise being given to the local public transport services. These were viewed as a key link for members of the forum to access all areas across RCT. Some limitations to the service were also commented on during the meeting.

"The local bus service is important as there are no trains in the area."

"Transport is good around our area. It stops after 6 o'clock, which is a little bit awkward, it goes on to the Sunday service, which is one every two hours."

6.8 **Prosperity:** This section obtained the least comments from the group however a number of comments were made indicating the importance of the economy, equality and housing. Whilst comment numbers were relatively low in this section, an indication that inclusivity and accessibility of opportunities was important to this group whilst also ensuring that affordable homes were available to residents across RCT.

"That there are opportunities and facilities in the local community that are inclusive and accessible to all."

"Affordable homes are important to have."

6.9 **Summary:** Overall, responses from the Disability Forum related heavily to Environment and Travel and Transport within the 'Places' priority, with particular concern for Cleanliness, Green Spaces and Dropped Kerbs. Themes related to the 'People' priority included Council Communication and Community Spirit, with particular importance placed on the effective communication of information to those in most need. Few references were made to the 'Prosperity' priority, however Economy, Equality, Housing and Council Performance were all briefly mentioned.

7 Council Staff Consultation Results

- 7.1 As the largest employer in the County Borough, with individuals closest to the operation and delivery of public services, RCT Council Staff were included as key stakeholders in the Corporate Plan consultation. Data was collected across two staff training sessions, with 28 participants from a variety of services. Participants were asked to take part in group discussions and submit written feedback on each of the Council's Corporate Priorities. 162 references were recorded in total, with each of the 16 primary themes represented at least once.
- 7.2 Themes relating to Environment (24) and Travel & Transport (22) were most frequent among Staff responses, while considerable attention was also given to Safety (16), Health (15) and Education (15).
- 7.3 **People:** Among themes relating to the 'People' priority, Council Staff were most concerned with matters of Health (15) and Community (11), with moderate emphasis given to Culture (8) and Council Communication (6).
- 7.4 References to Health Care Services (7) were most frequently recorded within the Health (15) theme, each addressing Access (5) to health care or Integration (2) of services. Remaining responses encompassed Mental (3) and Physical (5) health, the former centred on service Standards (2) and Funding (1), whereas the latter focussed on Fitness Incentives (3) and access to accompanying Facilities (2).
- 7.5 With regard to Community (11) themes, Staff responses were most frequently associated with the availability of Community Events (3) and Community Facilities (3), while references to Community Groups (2) and Networking (2) with local initiatives and other communities were also recorded.
- 7.6 Accounting for more references to the theme than any other group, Culture (8) was of considerable importance to Staff Respondents. Although Welsh Language (1) and Cultural Education (1) were both mentioned, themes within the culture category were predominantly associated with Cultural Facilities (6):

- 7.7 Further themes were largely distributed across Council Communication (6) and Young People (5). References to the former principally addressed issues of Inclusion (3) and accessible information, the latter noted a need for increased availability of Youth Activities.
- 7.8 **Places:** Staff responses relating to the 'Places' priority were primarily focussed on Environment (24) and Travel & Transport (22), however both Safety (16) and Town Centres (13) also received significant interest.
- 7.9 Of the themes relating to Environment (24), references to Green Spaces (12) were most commonly recorded. Within Green Spaces, Community Involvement (7) was deemed most important, with mentions of encouraging greater use, promoting outdoor activities and supporting associated community groups.
- 7.10 Staff responses in reference to Travel & Transport (22), were chiefly related to Public Transport (12), with the Affordability (3) and Availability (2) of services being of greatest concern. Among suggestions for improvement were the introduction of travel cards and linking with public facilities;
- 7.11 Themes of Safety (16) were mainly focussed on the general increase of Police Presence (7) and reduction of Anti-Social Behaviour (5), with some particular mention of tackling Substance Misuse (2). While remaining references were distributed somewhat sporadically across the category, multiple responses were received under the theme of Service Provision (2), specifically regarding the integration of services and improvement of response times.
- 7.12 Among Staff responses relating to Town Centres (13), themes of Facilities (8) and Regeneration/Aesthetics (4) were most common. Whereas references to Facilities covered a range of areas including Accessibility (2), Retail Units (2) and Other Amenities (2), i.e. more diverse businesses, references to Regeneration/Aesthetics centred almost entirely on addressing the problem of Empty Properties (3).
- 7.13 **Prosperity:** Within the 'Prosperity' priority, themes from Staff responses were mainly centred on Education (15), Economy (14) and Equality (8). In regard to Education (15), Staff participants placed greatest emphasis on adult Qualifications/Skills Development (12), making reference to the Availability (3), Affordability (3) and Awareness

(3) of related services. As mentioned in the quote below, suggestions for improvement included stronger partnerships with organisations such as Careers 4 Wales and the attraction of new businesses to the area:

“[The Council] need to attract businesses to the area, which will in turn start the qualification/upskill process”

- 7.14 Economy (14) themes were divided between Business (9) and Local Economy (5). Most common of the references within the Business category were those relating to the effective use of Council Procurement (3) to support local companies, including the review of contract frameworks and recruitment of local contractors.
- 7.15 Staff responses which referenced Equality (8) were again shared across Equal Opportunities (4) and Resource Distribution (4). Among the former were calls to embrace Diversity (2) and make opportunities available to those in employment as well as the unemployed. The latter, Resource Distribution, highlighted concerns of underrepresented Areas (3), with Council efforts perceived to be disproportionately focussed on locations within the Cynon Valley.
- 7.16 **Summary:** Staff responses were primarily concerned with Environment and Travel & Transport, however Education, Health and Economy each also received considerable attention. References to ‘People’ were largely associated with Health and Community, with Health Care Services, Physical Health and Youth Activities prominent sub themes. Considerable attention was also given to Culture and, in particular, Cultural Facilities.

Responses within the ‘Places’ priority centred on issues of Environment and Travel & Transport. While Community Involvement was frequently recorded in relation with the former, references to the latter largely focussed on affordable Public Transport.

‘Prosperity’ themes were mostly related to Education and Economy. Of the Education responses, greatest importance was given to the Availability, Affordability and Accessibility of further Qualifications/Skills Development. The latter addressed issues of both Business and Local Economy, with relaxed Business Rates and sustainable Procurement among the popular topics.

8 LGBTQ+ Consultation Results

- 8.1 A single consultation exercise took place during the inaugural Rhondda Pride event, wherein members of the LGBTQ+ community were asked to submit written notes outlining the issues they deemed to be most important. In total, 76 submissions were received during the event.
- 8.2 Responses from the LGBTQ+ Community were overwhelmingly focussed on Education (41), with only 5 primary themes emerging from the responses overall.
- 8.3 **People:** All themes within the 'People' priority related to either Community (15) or Support & Social Care (10).
- 8.4 Of the references to Community (15), each was directly tailored toward the increased frequency and promotion of Community Events (15), intended to advance Diversity Awareness (15). Suggestions for improvement in this area included the support of, and collaboration with, local LGBTQ+ Community Groups, engagement with younger LGBTQ+ members and appointment of LGBTQ+ representatives.
- 8.5 Responses pertaining to Support & Social Care (10) comprised the remaining themes within the 'People' priority, again all of which related to Diversity (10) and specifically LGBTQ+ (10) support systems. Participants noted that events such as Rhondda Pride were the only form of support available, with support in schools particularly insufficient.
- 8.6 **Places:** Responses within the 'Places' priority were exclusively related to issues of Safety (7). Concerns of Safety (7) were entirely centred on Anti-Social Behaviour in the form of Discrimination/Hate Crime (7). Participants requested that greater co-operation between the Police and LGBTQ+ was pursued and that awareness was raised of related services, such as the South Wales Police hate crime reporting system.
- 8.7 **Prosperity:** Themes within the 'Prosperity' priority were vastly directed towards Education (41), with some reference also given to Equality (3). Responses related to Education (41) were solely associated with Gender/Diversity Equality (41). The general consensus was that improved support systems were required across all schools, with specific

training provided to staff, greater visibility of LGBTQ+ representatives and more lessons provided on sexuality and gender identity. Specific concern was also raised over the support and protection of trans students, who were perceived to receive particularly poor support.

- 8.8 **Summary:** Of the 16 primary themes, only 5 were referenced by LGBTQ+ respondents, with the vast majority of responses centred on themes of Education.

Among the 'People' responses, LGBTQ+ respondents were most concerned with Community Events and Support & Social Care, both addressing the need for greater support and awareness of LGBTQ+ issues.

Within the 'Places' priority, responses were solely focussed on the single issue of Safety and, more specifically, protection against the occurrence of Hate Crimes.

References to the 'Prosperity' theme were overwhelmingly directed toward Education and the improvement of LGBTQ+ support and awareness in schools. Further responses focussed on Equal Opportunities, particularly related to LGBTQ+ in the workplace.

Appendix A: Definitions of Primary Themes

People

Primary Theme	Definition
Culture	<i>Any responses related to the protection or promotion of meaningful social traditions, heritage or the arts.</i>
Community	<i>References to people and relationships within a social context.</i>
Council Communication	<i>Responses related to the passing of information between the Council and its stakeholders.</i>
Health	<i>Responses related to any aspect of a person's health, physical, mental or otherwise.</i>
Support & Social Care	<i>References to additional care and support services, particularly the recipient has a recognised vulnerability.</i>
Young People	<i>Any reference to services or facilities tailored toward people below the age of 18.</i>

Table 9. Primary Theme Definitions (People).

Places

Primary Theme	Definition
Environment	<i>References relating to the natural physical environment and factors that may affect its current or future state.</i>
Town Centres	<i>References to the condition of local business commercial centres, including any public facilities and other amenities.</i>
Travel & Transport	<i>References to factors affecting the movement of people throughout the County Borough.</i>
Safety	<i>Factors relating to the sense of safety and security experienced by residents.</i>

Table 10. Primary Theme Definitions (Places).

Prosperity

Primary Theme	Definition
Council Operations	<i>References to Council systems and processes which may influence the wider community.</i>
Economy	<i>Factors affecting the conduct of business and commerce throughout the County Borough.</i>
Education	<i>References to both schools and opportunities for additional learning.</i>
Equality	<i>Factors affecting the ability of all peoples within the County Borough to develop and succeed equally.</i>
Housing	<i>Factors relating to the residences and accommodation of people within Rhondda Cynon Taf.</i>

Table 11. Primary Theme Definitions (Prosperity).

Population Adjusted Themes

People		Places		Prosperity	
Theme (Sub Theme)	Freq.	Theme (Sub Theme)	Freq.	Theme (Sub Theme)	Freq.
Community	251	Town Centres	369	Education	63
<i>Community Spirit</i>	161	<i>Facilities</i>	325	<i>Schools</i>	57
<i>Community Groups</i>	65	<i>Regeneration/Aesthetics</i>	29	<i>Qualifications/Skills Development</i>	6
<i>Community Facilities</i>	18	<i>Accessibility</i>	15		
<i>Community Events</i>	6				
<i>Networks</i>	1				
Health	193	Travel & Transport	322	Housing	51
<i>Health Care Services</i>	82	<i>Public Transport</i>	203	<i>Land Use</i>	25
<i>Wellbeing</i>	66	<i>Parking</i>	45	<i>Affordable Housing</i>	24
<i>Physical Health</i>	35	<i>Accessibility</i>	35	<i>Private Rental</i>	1
<i>Mental Health</i>	10	<i>Highways</i>	18	<i>Housing Support</i>	<1
<i>Health Education</i>	<1	<i>Electric Vehicles</i>	14		
		<i>Traffic</i>	3		
		<i>Active Travel</i>	3		
Council Communication	165	Environment	299	Equality	31
<i>Inclusion/Engagement</i>	88	<i>Green Spaces</i>	131	<i>Resource Distribution</i>	12
<i>Methods</i>	44	<i>Cleanliness</i>	131	<i>Equal Opportunities</i>	9
<i>Standards</i>	33	<i>Sustainability</i>	28	<i>Support</i>	9
		<i>Noise</i>	7		
		<i>Land Use</i>	1		
		<i>Environmental Education</i>	1		
		<i>Flood Risk</i>	1		

People		Place		Prosperity	
Theme (<i>Sub Theme</i>)	Freq.	Theme (<i>Sub Theme</i>)	Freq	Theme (<i>Sub Theme</i>)	Freq
Young People	74	Safety	162	Economy	24
<i>Youth Activities</i>	63	<i>Anti-Social Behaviour</i>	67	<i>Business</i>	17
<i>Youth Facilities</i>	11	<i>Police Presence</i>	59	<i>Local Economy</i>	7
<i>Service Provision</i>	<1	<i>Road Safety</i>	11		
		<i>Street Lighting</i>	9		
		<i>Other</i>	1		
		<i>Service Provision</i>	1		
		<i>General</i>	14		
Social Care	30			Employment	23
<i>Disabled Persons Support</i>	11			<i>Local Jobs</i>	19
<i>Elderly Persons Support</i>	11			<i>Council Employment</i>	3
<i>Diversity Support</i>	3			<i>Adult Career Support</i>	1
<i>Family Support</i>	2				
<i>Food Poverty</i>	2				
<i>Resources</i>	1				
<i>Younger Persons Support</i>	<1				
Culture	5			Council Operations	16
<i>Cultural Facilities</i>	3			<i>Processes</i>	15
<i>Arts</i>	<1			<i>Funding</i>	1
<i>Cultural Education</i>	<1				
<i>Welsh Language</i>	<1				
Total	714	Total	1152	Total	211

Table 12. Primary and Secondary Theme Frequencies (Population Adjusted).