



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

24th MAY 2023

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION STRATEGY

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, DEMOCRATIC SERVICES & COMMUNICATION

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 For Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to formally respond to the [Consultation](#) on the draft [Public Participation Strategy](#) (Appendix A) as required by the Local Government & Elections Act 2021.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that Members consider the strategy and determine whether they wish to make any further comments or suggestions, to inform the final strategy before consideration by full Council.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Section 40 of the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021 places a duty on each Principal Council to prepare and publish a Public Participation Strategy.
- 3.2 To provide Scrutiny with the opportunity to respond to the consultation by the 16th June 2023 so that it can have its say on the Strategy

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Local authorities in Wales must, under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, publish a Participation Strategy that sets out the ways in which local people are encouraged to participate in the decision making process of the council.
- 4.2 In developing its public participation strategy a council must consult people who live, work or study in the council's area and anyone else it thinks appropriate. The Act requires a council's first strategy made

under this section to be published as soon as reasonably practicable after the local government elections in May 2022.

- 4.3 The Act places a number of duties on local authorities regarding participation. These are to:
- Promote awareness of the functions the council carries out to local residents, businesses and visitors.
 - Share information about how to go about becoming an elected member and what the role of councillor involves.
 - Provide greater access to information about decisions that have been made, or that will be made by the council.
 - Provide and promote opportunities for residents to provide feedback to the council, including comments, complaints and other types of representations.
 - Promote awareness of the benefits of using social media to communicate with residents to councillors.

5 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The draft Public Participation Strategy looks to improve the equality and diversity of participation across all areas of Rhondda Cynon Taf, ensuring all those that live, work or study within the Authority have the opportunity to engage in the Democratic Process.
- 5.2 An equality Impact Assessment and Welsh Language impact assessment has been completed as part of the drafting of the draft strategy and are attached at **Appendix B**

6 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 A formal Consultation on the Strategy has been launched as outlined above through the Council website.

7 FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

- 7.1 All costs associated with the Strategy will be contained within existing budgets.

8 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 8.1 Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021.

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

9.1 The Plan encompasses all of the Council's corporate plan priorities as well as the duties and goals of the Well Being of Future Generations Act.

- A public body must take account of the importance of involving other persons with an interest in achieving the well-being goals and ensure those persons reflect the diversity of the population;
- Effective involvement of people and communities in decisions that affect them is at the heart of improving well-being currently and in the future; and,
- It is vital to factor people's needs; ensuring engagement is meaningful and effective.

10 CONCLUSION

10.1 The draft Public Participation Strategy reaffirms the council's commitment to listening, conversing with and responding to the needs of our communities - building clear, shared expectations and two-way engagement, and clearly demonstrates how the participation duty is being fulfilled.