



**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CABINET**

**REVIEW OF THE LOCAL TOILET STRATEGY 2019-2023**

**18<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2023**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH, PROTECTION AND COMMUNITY SERVICES**

**Author: Caroline O'Neill, Head of Arts, Culture and Library Services**

**1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 This report has been prepared to provide Cabinet with an update on the review of the Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council Local Toilets Strategy from 2019-2023 to 2023-2028.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 2.1 Notes the information provided in the report; and
- 2.2 Approves the reviewed Local Toilets Strategy 2023-2028 .

**3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 To provide Cabinet with an update on the revised Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council Local Toilets Strategy 2023-2028 and to seek approval for publishing.

**4. BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 The Public Health (Wales) Act 2017 requires local authorities to publish a Local Toilets Strategy for its area. The Act received Royal Assent in July 2017 and brings together a range of practical actions for improving and protecting health. Part 8 of the Act introduces provision of toilets and specifically Local Toilet Strategies.
- 4.2 The local authority has responsibility to:
- assess the community's need for toilets, including changing facilities for babies and changing places facilities for people with disabilities;
  - provide details of how to meet the identified need;

- produce a Local Toilets Strategy; and
  - review the strategy, update and publicise revisions.
- 4.3 Local authorities had to prepare and publish their initial strategies by 31 May 2019, taking a strategic view on how facilities can be provided and accessed by their local population. Upon review of this strategy, Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council is required to publish a statement of progress. The first Local Toilets Strategy for Rhondda Cynon Taf was published in 2019.
- 4.4 The provision of local toilets for public use is not a statutory requirement of local authorities in Wales. At a challenging time for local authorities, this strategy aims to mitigate potential impacts by making toilets in more Council facilities available for public use and to work with the private sector to help promote their facilities.
- 4.5 The strategy aims to review the quality and quantity of local toilets throughout the county borough, and to provide or facilitate the provision of clean, safe, accessible and sustainable toilets for residents and visitors to the area at locations where the need for such facilities has been identified.
- 4.6 The following have been considered in reviewing the initial strategy, with any relevant updates and changes made to the revised strategy for 2023-2028:
- identifying the current level of provision of public toilets;
  - analysing the findings of the completed assessment of need activities for toilets available for use by the public in their area;
  - consideration to the requirements of the general population;
  - identifying the needs for particular user groups;
  - identifying any gaps in current provision;
  - supporting Welsh Government initiatives to improve information available on toilet facilities;
  - providing information setting out the steps which the local authority proposes to take to meet this need, and any other information which the council considers appropriate.

## **5. PROGRESS TO DATE**

- 5.1 The Council has continued the level of investment to maintain the current provision. The Council does not charge for use of its public toilets. A list of public conveniences provided by the Council is [here](#).
- 5.2 Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council has continued to invest in facilities since the 2019 Local Toilets Strategy with an extensive enhancement and refurbishments programme, totalling in excess of circa £315,000.
- 5.3 In addition to the enhancements to Council owned and managed facilities, three further developments have taken place working with key community partners.

- 5.4 A number of changing places are available across the borough. Changing places are facilities for individuals with a range of disabilities and limited mobility who are unable to access standard disabled toilets. These facilities feature specialist equipment including hoists and changing benches to enable these individuals to access public toilets in their communities. For full details of available facilities please see: [changing-places.org/find](http://changing-places.org/find).
- 5.5 Mapping locations has commenced and is an important part of the strategy ensuring that people who need to use toilet facilities can easily access information about the location, opening times, accessibility, and type of facilities available.

## **6. OBJECTIVES AND ACTION PLAN**

6.1 Two objectives have been developed with supporting actions:

6.1.1 To enhance and maximise the use of existing facilities by:

- Promoting equal opportunities to provide appropriate, accessible and effective facilities to all sections of the community, including changing facilities for babies and changing places for disabled persons. Looking for opportunities to include these provisions in any new (Council owned) developments where possible and publicising more widely the already available facilities.
- Exploring the option of displaying the toilet logo sticker at the entrances of appropriate publicly accessible Council buildings, community venues and private businesses that agree to participate.
- Working with Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board and health care providers to encourage them to make facilities available to the public, to participate in the mapping scheme, and to display the toilet logo sticker in appropriate premises.
- Improving awareness and information available on toilet provision in the borough by updating information on the Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council website and regularly update the “Lle” open access data repository with Welsh Government.
- Exploring the provision of improved physical signage to existing facilities, in particular to consider new accessible signage to tackle discrimination.
- Reviewing cleansing operations and standards periodically to ensure effective provision within allocated resources.
- Reviewing opening hours of existing facilities with a view to exploring alternative opening hours where practicable.

- Working with the Police, members of the public, community groups and other interested parties, to ensure that facilities are as safe as possible.

#### 6.1.2 Promote additional, appropriate and accessible facilities by:

- Exploring all available options, including working with the private sector, community and voluntary groups and Town and Community Councils, to make more local toilets and changing facilities available where they are most needed. Working with our local Neighbourhood Network partners and consider any opportunities for community asset transfers where available.
- Working with partners to improve toilet provision close to key night-time gathering points, including taxi ranks, car parks, railway stations, bus stations and stops.
- Ensuring that the Events Safety Advisory Group continues to provide advice and guidance on appropriate and accessible temporary toilet facilities to be provided at organised events to meet the diverse needs of the community.
- Considering dementia-friendly improvements such as increasing colour contrast in Council owned toilet facilities.
- Considering ratio of male to female facilities, whereby 1:2 is the ideal ratio as outlined by WG.
- Considering toilet provision for the LGBTQI+ community.
- In line with the Council's Tourism Strategy, considering the required toilet facilities to serve the needs of visitors.
- Considering allowing members of the public free access to additional toilet facilities in publicly accessible Council buildings and promote this using the toilet logo stickers.
- Promoting all available facilities using the toilet logo sticker with associated public awareness raising campaign, so community members recognise the logo and have an understanding that premises that display it allow the public access to their toilet facilities.

## **7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS / SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY**

### 7.1 In reviewing the Local Toilets Strategy 2019-2023, an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been undertaken to ensure that:

- The Council meets the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duties;
- Due regard has been taken of the likely impact of the decision in terms of equality and discrimination.

- 7.2 It is considered that the impact on service users, employees and the wider community is expected to be positive, as the strategy's objectives are to:
- Enhance and maximise the use of existing facilities;
  - Promote additional, appropriate and accessible facilities.
- 7.3 The strategy outlines how the Council has maintained and invested in its local toilet facilities, including increasing the number of changing facility places.
- 7.4 It refers to exploring improved signage; improving information available; considering the need of the LGBTQI+ community; considering dementia-friendly improvements; and working with partners to improve access across the county borough generally as well as at organised events.
- 7.5 There is no adverse impact on any protected characteristic from the adoption of the revised strategy.
- 7.6 Subject to Cabinet approval, the EIA will be published on the Council's website.

## **8. WELSH LANGUAGE IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 In reviewing the Local Toilets Strategy 2019-2023, a Welsh Language Impact Assessment (WLIS) has been undertaken to ensure:
- The Council considers the principles and requirements of the Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015;
  - Compliance with the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.
- 8.2 It is considered that the impact on service users, employees and the wider community is expected to be positive with the proposals outlined in the strategy:
- Bilingual signage denoting local toilet facilities across the borough;
  - Bilingual information and advice in relation to local toilet facilities available on the Council website;
  - Bilingual information and advice in relation to all-Wales local toilet facilities available on the WG website 'Lle'.
- 8.3 There is no adverse impact on the Welsh language from the adoption of the revised strategy.
- 8.4 Subject to Cabinet approval, the WLIS will be published on the Council's website.

## **9. CONSULTATION / INVOLVEMENT**

- 9.1 The revised strategy was presented to the Community Services Scrutiny Committee on 10<sup>th</sup> July 2023 whereby the Committee resolved to acknowledge the information provided in the report and for the comments to be fed back to Cabinet.

- 9.2 In preparation of the 2019 Local Toilet Strategy, for a four-week period starting in October 2018, an Assessment of Need public consultation was conducted across Rhondda Cynon Taf. This involved engaging with communities and a wide range of interested parties to consider the requirements of the general population, to consider the needs for particular user groups, to review existing toilet facilities, and to identify any gaps in current provision.
- 9.3 The engagement was conducted via a range of approaches including feedback from the public, social media, online content and emails, surveys and questionnaires, attendance at community venues.
- 9.4 Respondents were asked a wide variety of questions relating to areas most visited within Rhondda Cynon Taf; times of visiting; details of toilet and changing facility provision; attractions and parks most visited; followed by a series of statements relating to facilities which respondents were asked to agree or disagree with.
- 9.5 Furthermore, a 12-week period of public consultation starting in February 2019 was conducted across Rhondda Cynon Taf. This involved engaging with communities and a wide range of interested parties to consult on the draft Local Toilets Strategy, which had been produced following the Assessment of Need public consultation.
- 9.6 The 12-week public consultation asked a number of questions, including if respondents felt that the strategy provides clear information to help understand why the actions proposed in the strategy are necessary; if they agree with the actions under Objective 1: to enhance and maximise the use of existing facilities; and if they agree with the actions under Objective 2: to promote additional, appropriate and accessible facilities and to provide further information if they felt that there was anything missing from the proposed objectives and supporting actions.
- 9.7 During the 12-week public consultation, feedback on the draft strategy was provided by the Community Liaison Committee and the Authority's Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee.
- 9.8 As part of the review of the RCTCBC Local Toilets Strategy, local community consultation took place during the period July 2022 – October 2022. 130 people participated who agreed that the key points to come from the original public needs assessment remain valid. These key points are outlined below:
- Facilities in the towns and villages visited most often as primarily inadequate, as opposed to the other options available, during early morning, between 9am and 6pm, during evenings, Sundays and Bank Holidays.
  - Toilet provision was adequate during the day but inadequate early morning and evenings at the attractions and parks visited most frequently. Both changing facilities for young children and people with

disabilities were deemed to be inadequate during the day with none available early morning and evenings.

- Concerns about feeling unsafe using public toilets in relation to facilities being used for anti-social behaviour and drug activity.
- Lack of changing facilities for individuals with disabilities was highlighted with specific mention in relation to both children and adults.
- Too few public toilet facilities available and that the location of facilities is not convenient.
- Indication that there is not enough information on where facilities are located.
- Lack of facilities deterring visitors to certain locations.
- Indication that facilities are not open at the times that they are needed.
- A feeling that toilets should be free to use.

## **10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)**

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

## **11. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED**

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

11.2 The Public Health (Wales) Act 2017 requires local authorities to publish a Local Toilets Strategy for its area. The Act received Royal Assent in July 2017 and brings together a range of practical actions for improving and protecting health. Part 8 of the Act introduces provision of toilets and specifically Local Toilet Strategies.

## **12. LINKS TO THE CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELLBEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT**

12.1 The Council's Corporate Plan, "Making a Difference" sets out a clear vision to make Rhondda Cynon Taf 'the best place in Wales to live, work and play, where people and businesses are independent, healthy and prosperous'. The Council is committed to delivering three main priorities under this plan, as follows: ensuring people are independent, healthy and successful; creating places where people are proud to live, work and play; and enabling prosperity by creating the opportunity for people and businesses to be innovative, entrepreneurial, and to fulfil their potential and prosper. The Local Toilets Strategy can contribute to these, supporting a number of the objectives within the Council's Corporate Plan 2020-2024 to make the vision a reality.

12.2 The draft Cwm Taf Morgannwg Wellbeing Plan 2023-2028: 'A More Equal Cwm Taf Morgannwg', contains two objectives: Healthy Local

Neighbourhoods – where our communities are inclusive and feel cohesive and people feel safe, supported, and valued; and, Sustainable and resilient local neighbourhoods – where we understand and respond to the risk of climate change to our communities, valuing, managing and enjoying our green and blue spaces responsibly.

- 12.3 These plans set the strategic direction at a regional and local level. The Local Toilets Strategy cuts across a number of these objectives and aims to support them. Publicly accessible toilets are needed by every one of us at some point where we live, work or visit and so the provision touches on all areas of the Council in some way.
- 12.4 The Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing of Wales. Due regard has been made to the above five ways of working when revising this strategy.

### **13. STRATEGIC OR RELEVANT TO ELECTORAL WARDS**

- 13.1 The Local Toilets Strategy is a strategic document that is relevant to the whole of the County Borough to ensure toilet facilities can be provided and accessed by the local population.

### **13. CONCLUSION**

- 13.1 The provision of local toilets for public use is not a statutory requirement of local authorities in Wales. At a challenging time for local authorities, this strategy aims to mitigate potential impacts by making toilets in more Council facilities available for public use and to work with the private sector to help promote their facilities.
- 13.2 Two objectives have been developed with supporting actions:
- To enhance and maximise the use of existing facilities;
  - Promote additional, appropriate and accessible facilities.
- 13.3 The strategy outlines how the Council has maintained and invested in its local toilet facilities, including increasing the number of changing facility places. It refers to exploring improved signage; improving information available; considering the need of the LGBTQI+ community; considering dementia-friendly improvements; and working with partners to improve access across the county borough generally as well as at organised events.
- 13.4 Cabinet is recommended to note the information provided in this report and approve the revised Local Toilets Strategy 2023-2025.

**Other Information: *Relevant Scrutiny Committee:***  
Community Services Scrutiny Committee

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

**AS AMENDED BY**

**THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985**

**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CABINET**

**18<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2023**

**A LOCAL TOILET STRATEGY REVIEW**

**REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH, PROTECTION AND  
COMMUNITY SERVICES IN DISCUSSIONS WITH COUNCILLOR BOB  
HARRIS, CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITIES AND WELLBEING**

**Background Papers**

10<sup>th</sup> July 2023 – Community Services Scrutiny Committee

Officer to contact:

Caroline O'Neill, Head of Arts, Culture and Library Services

## WELSH LANGUAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT TOOL

This Welsh Language Impact Assessment (WLIS) tool enables RCT Council to consider the principles and requirements of the [Welsh Language Standards \(No.1\) Regulations 2015](#) to ensure compliance with the [Welsh Language \(Wales\) Measure 2011](#).

### **Stage 1 – Information Gathering**

**NOTE:** As you complete this tool you will be asked for **evidence to support your views**. Please see [Welsh Language Impact Assessment Guidance](#) for more information on data sources.

<b>Proposal Name:</b>	Review of Local Toilets Strategy 2023-2028
<b>Department</b>	Arts, Culture and Library Services (and Community Development)
<b>Director</b>	Louise Davies
<b>Officer Completing the WLIA</b>	Caroline O'Neill
<b>Email</b>	<a href="mailto:caroline.a.oneill@rctcbc.gov.uk">caroline.a.oneill@rctcbc.gov.uk</a>
<b>Phone</b>	07786 523614
<b>Brief Description</b>	<p>This strategy contributes towards achieving accessible and clean toilets wherever people live, work or visit. Need for provision may increase in time as developments take place, population needs change, and through welcoming visitors to the area. This is an opportune time to set a strategy for promoting access to toilet facilities where they are needed.</p> <p>Further information is available here:  <a href="#">Local Toilets Strategy   Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council (rctcbc.gov.uk)</a>            Recent Community Services Scrutiny Committee report is here: <a href="#">Agenda for Community Services Scrutiny Committee on Monday, 10th July, 2023, 5.00 pm - Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council (modern.gov.co.uk)</a></p>

	<p>The Public Health (Wales) Act 2017 received Royal Assent in July 2017 and brings together a range of practical actions for improving and protecting health. Part 8 of the Act introduces provision of toilets and specifically Local Toilet Strategies.</p> <p>The aim of Part 8 is to ensure each local authority in Wales assesses the needs of its community in relation to toilets, and then takes a strategic and transparent approach to best meet that need. The intended effect is to improve the planning of provision so that any such decisions are taken within the overall context of meeting the communities' identified needs. A strategic approach will also help to mitigate any negative impacts of changes to provision.</p> <p>The local authority has responsibility to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• assess the community's need for toilets, including changing facilities for babies and changing places facilities for people with disabilities;</li> <li>• provide details of how to meet the identified need;</li> <li>• produce a Local Toilets Strategy; and</li> <li>• review the strategy, update and publicise revisions.</li> </ul> <p>Local authorities had to prepare and publish their initial strategies by 31 May 2019. The duty to prepare a Local Toilets Strategy does not require local authorities to provide and maintain public toilets directly. The local authority must take a strategic view on how facilities can be provided and accessed by their local population. Upon review of this strategy, Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council is required to publish a statement of progress.</p>
<b>Date</b>	14/08/2023
<p><b>Please outline who this proposal affects? (Service Users, Employees, Wider Community)</b></p>	Service users, Employees, Wider Community

<p><b>What are the aims of the policy, and how do these relate to the Welsh Language?</b></p>	<p>The aim of this strategy is to meet the legislative requirements set out within Part 8 of the Public Health (Wales) Act 2017, ensuring each local authority in Wales assesses the needs of its community in relation to toilets, and then takes a strategic and transparent approach to best meet that need, with consideration to the Welsh language.</p>
<p><b>Who will benefit / Could the policy affect Welsh language groups? If so, list them here.</b></p>	<p>Any individual who uses local public toilet facilities could be affected by this strategy.</p>
<p><b>Current linguistic profile of the geographical area(s) concerned</b></p>	<p>The 2021 Census figures regarding the Welsh language show a decrease in the percentage of Welsh speakers across Wales to 17.8%. There was, however, a small increase in RCT – the percentage of the population of the county borough who can speak Welsh increased from 12.3% to 12.4%. Numerically, RCT saw a 2.8% increase in the number of Welsh speakers in the county borough, from 27,779 speakers to 28,556 speakers. RCT was also one of only four LAs in Wales to see an increase in the percentage of Welsh speakers – the others were Cardiff, the Vale of Glamorgan and Merthyr Tudful. All of these are neighbouring county boroughs, which could demonstrate that our region is seeing some positive trends in terms of increases in Welsh speakers, and that there may be a resulting increase in demand for services through the medium of Welsh. As further, more detailed, data from the Census becomes available for RCT (e.g. LSOA data), we will need to consider what impact it may have on the services we provide.</p>
<p><b>Other relevant data or research</b></p>	<p>None</p>
<p><b>Further Welsh Language Considerations</b></p>	<p>The Council believes that the Local Toilet Strategy does not necessitate the need for a FULL Welsh Language Impact Assessment, based on the subject matter.</p> <p>However, the Council will still be bound by the relevant Standards imposed on it and contained within the 2015 Regulations. This will include, although not exhaustive, ensuring any signs, notices and material for public view, as well as any engagement and consultations are available in Welsh and/or bilingual.</p> <p>Furthermore, as the Local Toilet Strategy embeds and is further reviewed, we will continue to work with the Welsh language Third Sector (e.g. Y Muni in Pontypridd), Welsh language groups and organisations to</p>

include them in the Strategy and offer them an opportunity to contribute to the provision. This in turn could increase foot fall for those organisations and further promote opportunities for engagement (for Welsh and Non-Welsh speakers alike) to engage with the language. This aspect would aid in those areas that are hosting elements of the Rhondda Cynon Taf Eisteddfod in 2024. We will also work with the Town Centre Strategy Teams, Regeneration and businesses to look at Welsh language opportunities with regards to toilet provision.

Lastly, we will also continue to work with promoters and organisers to ensure adequate toilet provision is made available at specific Welsh language events (i.e. Eisteddfod, Parti Ponty), or with local partners where visitors and attendees may continue to use Welsh outside of the events area.

We will continue to use the WG website 'Lle' to refer to toilet facilities and also this Strategy to promote the Welsh language (through using a Welsh word as a branding/naming opportunity).

## **Stage 2 – Impact Assessment**

In this section you need to consider the impact, the evidence and any action you are taking for improvement. This is to ensure that the opportunities for people who choose to live their lives and access services through the medium of Welsh are not inferior to what is afforded to those choosing to do so in English, in accordance with the requirement of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.

Please note there is a separate impact assessment for Equality and Socio-Economic duty that must also be completed for policy proposals.

Remember that effects that are positive for some groups could be detrimental to others - even among Welsh language groups. Consider the effects on different groups. For example, a proposal may be beneficial to Welsh learners, but not to Welsh speakers.

### **Will the proposed action affect any or all of the following?**

	<b>Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts?</b>	<b>Describe why it will have a positive/negative or neutral impact on the Welsh language.</b>	<b>What evidence do you have to support this view?</b>	<b>What action(s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?</b>
<b>Opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language</b>  e.g. staff, residents and visitors  The rights of Welsh speakers and learners to use Welsh when dealing with the council and for staff to use Welsh at Work	Positive	The strategy refers to the use of Welsh Government stipulated bilingual signage to be used to identify public toilet facilities; a Welsh Government established bilingual open access data repository for identifying locations of facilities via the website, 'Lle'; and a bilingual list of local toilet facilities within RCTCBC available via the website too.	N/A	As the Strategy further embeds and is further reviewed, associated Welsh Language Groups will be given an opportunity to contribute to the provisions made. This will ensure the Strategy continues to promote the Welsh Language when opportunities arise e.g the Eisteddfod in 2024.

## Stage 2 – Impact Assessment

Will the proposed action affect any or all of the following?

	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts?	Describe why it will have a positive/negative or neutral impact on the Welsh language.	What evidence do you have to support this view?	What action(s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
<p><b>Numbers and / or percentages of Welsh speakers</b>                      e.g Welsh Medium Education / Study Opportunities. Links with the Welsh Government's <a href="#">Cymraeg 2050 Strategy</a> / <a href="#">RCTCBC Five Year Welsh Language Strategy</a></p>	Neutral	N/A	N/A	N/A
<p><b>Opportunities to promote the Welsh language</b>                      e.g. status, use of Welsh language services, use of Welsh in everyday life in work and in the community</p> <p>Actively encourage and promote the use of our services in Welsh to see an increase in demand over time</p>	Positive	The strategy refers to the use of Welsh Government stipulated bilingual signage to be used to identify public toilet facilities; a Welsh Government established bilingual open access data repository for identifying locations of facilities via the website, 'Lle'; and a bilingual list of local toilet facilities within RCTCBC available via the website too.		We will continue to work with promoters and organisers to ensure adequate toilet provision is made available at specific Welsh language events (i.e. Eisteddfod, Parti Ponty), or with local partners where visitors and attendees may continue to use Welsh outside of the events area.

**Stage 2 – Impact Assessment**

**Will the proposed action affect any or all of the following?**

	<b>Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts?</b>	<b>Describe why it will have a positive/negative or neutral impact on the Welsh language.</b>	<b>What evidence do you have to support this view?</b>	<b>What action(s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?</b>
<p><b>Compliance with the <a href="#">Council’s Statutory Welsh Language Standards</a></b>                      e.g                      increasing or reducing the Council’s ability to deliver services through the Medium of Welsh.</p> <p>Consider the rights of Welsh speakers to use Welsh when dealing with the Council and for staff to use Welsh at Work</p>	Positive	The strategy refers to the use of Welsh Government stipulated bilingual signage to be used to identify public toilet facilities; a Welsh Government established bilingual open access data repository for identifying locations of facilities via the website, ‘Lle’; and a bilingual list of local toilet facilities within RCTCBC available via the website too.	The Strategy published in 2019 noted bilingual signage and information available publicly via the Council’s website and ‘Lle’.	Compliance in this area will be high through close working with Welsh Language Services to ensure signage is translated correctly and that any communications/website content is translated accurately.
<p><b>Treating the Welsh language, no less favourably than the English language</b></p>	Positive	The strategy refers to the use of Welsh Government stipulated bilingual signage to be used to identify public toilet facilities; a Welsh Government established bilingual open access data repository for identifying	The Strategy published in 2019 noted bilingual signage and information available publicly via the Council’s website and ‘Lle’.	Compliance in this area will be high through close working with Welsh Language Services to ensure signage is translated correctly and that any

		locations of facilities via the website, 'Lle'; and a bilingual list of local toilet facilities within RCTCBC available via the website too.		communications/website content is translated accurately.
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**Stage 3 - Strengthening the proposal**

Having listed actions in section 2 which may mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts – please record below which ones you will imbed into the policy proposal and who will be responsible for them.

Also consider is the proposal necessary? Would it be possible to meet demand without any new developments? Could other existing provision be used? Where should the development be?

<b>What are you going to do?</b>	<b>When are you going to do it?</b>	<b>Who is responsible?</b>
Continue to review the Strategy in line with our Welsh Language Standards and work with Welsh Language Groups/promoters so that any opportunity to promote the Welsh Language in regard to the Strategy is taken advantage of.	Throughout the span of this strategy's lifecycle	Service Manager – Community Development

If ways of reducing the impact have been identified but are not possible to implement, please explain why. Give sufficient detail of data or research that has led to your reasoning.

<b>What was identified?</b>	<b>Why is it not possible?</b>
N/A	N/A

## **Stage 4 – Review**

As part of the Welsh Language, Equalities and Socio Economic Duty Impact Assessment Process all proposals that fall within the definition of Significant Key Decision should present at the Officer Review Panel. This panel is made up of officers from across Council Services and acts as a critical friend before your report is finalised and published for SLT/Cabinet approval.

If this proposal is a Key Strategic Decision please forward your impact assessment to [CouncilBusiness@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:CouncilBusiness@rctcbc.gov.uk) for an Officer Review Panel to be organised to discuss your proposal. [See our guidance document](#) for more information on what a Significant Key Decision is.

For all policy proposals, whether it is a Significant Key Decision or not you are required to forward this assessment to Welsh Language services in the first instance for some initial guidance and feedback.

It is important to keep a record of this process so that we can demonstrate how we have considered and built in sustainable Welsh language considerations wherever possible. Please ensure you update the relevant sections below

<b>Welsh Language Services Comments</b>	<b>Date Considered</b>	<b>Brief description of any amendments made following Welsh Language Services feedback</b>
<p>The Council believes that the Local Toilets Strategy does not necessitate the need for a FULL Welsh Language Impact Assessment, based on the subject matter.</p> <p>However, the Council will still be bound by the relevant Standards imposed on it and contained within the 2015 Regulations. This will include, although not exhaustive, ensuring any signs, notices and material for public view, as well as any engagement and consultations are available in Welsh and/or bilingual.</p> <p>Furthermore, as the Local Toilet Strategy embeds and is further reviewed, we will continue to work with the Welsh language Third Sector (e.g. Y Muni in Pontypridd), Welsh language groups and organisations to include them in the Strategy and offer them an opportunity to contribute to the provision. This in turn could increase foot fall for those</p>	16/08/2023	N/A

<p>organisations and further promote opportunities for engagement (for Welsh and Non-Welsh speakers alike) to engage with the language. This aspect would aide in those areas that are hosting elements of the Rhondda Cynon Taf Eisteddfod in 2024. We will also work with the Town Centre Strategy Teams, Regeneration and businesses to look at Welsh language opportunities with regards to toilet provision.</p> <p>Lastly, we will also continue to work with promoters and organisers to ensure adequate toilet provision is made available at specific Welsh language events (i.e. Eisteddfod, Parti Ponty), or with local partners where visitors and attendees may continue to use Welsh outside of the events area.</p> <p>We will continue to use the WG name 'Lle' to refer to toilet facilities and also this Strategy to promote the Welsh language (e.g. through considering using a Welsh word as a branding/naming opportunity).</p>		
<b>Officer Review Panel Comments</b>	<b>Date Considered</b>	<b>Brief description of any amendments made following Officer Review Panel considerations</b>
N/A		
<b>Consultation Comments</b>	<b>Date Considered</b>	<b>Brief description of any amendments made following consultation</b>
N/A		

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**Stage 5 – Monitoring, Evaluating and Reviewing**

How and who will you monitor the impact and effectiveness of the proposal?

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council will prepare an interim progress report setting out the steps taken in line with the strategy every two years, commencing from the date of the last published strategy. The interim progress report will be published within six months of the end date of the two year period. Following the publication of this Revised Local Toilets Strategy in May 2023, progress will be considered, and a report prepared and published before the end of November 2025.

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council may review its strategy at any time following which it must publish a statement of the steps which it has taken in accordance with the strategy. Following a review, if it is decided to revise the strategy it will publish the revised strategy and then prepare an interim progress report covering the two-year period commencing from the date of publication.

**Stage 6 – Summary of Impacts for the Proposal**

Provide below a summary of the impact assessment. This summary should be included in the Welsh Language Considerations section of the SLT/Cabinet report template. The impact assessment should be published alongside the report.

*A Welsh Language Impact Assessment has been completed and the main findings are as follows -*

There would be a positive outcome as the proposals outlined in the strategy:

Bilingual signage denoting local toilet facilities across the borough.

Bilingual information and advice in relation to local toilet facilities available on the Council website.

Bilingual information and advice in relation to all-Wales local toilet facilities available on the WG website 'Lle'.

<b>Stage 7 – Sign Off</b>			
<b>Name of Officer completing the WLIA</b>	Caroline O'Neill	<b>Service Director Name:</b>	
<b>Position</b>	Head of Arts, Culture and Libraries	<b>I recommend that the proposal: (Highlight decision)</b>	<b>Is implemented with no amendments</b>
			<b>Is implemented taking into account the mitigating actions outlined.</b>
			<b>Is rejected due to disproportionate negative impacts on the Welsh language</b>
<b>Signature</b>		<b>Service Director Signature</b>	
<b>Date</b>	17.08.2023	<b>Date</b>	

## EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM INCLUDING SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY

(Revised March 2021)

Please refer to the current Equality Impact Assessment guidance when completing this document. If you would like further guidance please contact the Diversity and Inclusion Team on 01443 444529.

An equality impact assessment **must** be undertaken at the outset of any proposal to ensure robust evidence is considered in decision making. This documentation will support the Council in making informed, effective and fair decisions whilst ensuring compliance with a range of relevant legislation, including:

- Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011
- Socio-economic Duty – Sections 1 to 3 of the Equality Act 2010.

This document will also contribute towards our duties to create a More Equal Wales within the

- Well-being of Future Generation (Wales) Act 2015.

The [‘A More Equal Wales – Mapping Duties’](#) guide highlights the alignment of our duties in respect of the above-mentioned legislation.

## SECTION 1 – PROPOSAL DETAILS

Lead Officer: Syd Dennis

Service Director: Louise Davies

Service Area: Arts, Culture and Libraries (and Community Development)

Date: 10/08/2023

1.a) What are you assessing for impact?

Strategy/Plan	Service Re-Model/Discontinuation of Service	Policy/Procedure	Practice	Information/Position Statement
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

1.b) What is the name of the proposal?

Review of RCTCBC Local Toilets Strategy 2023- 2028

1.c) Please provide an overview of the proposal providing any supporting links to reports or documents.

This strategy contributes towards achieving accessible and clean toilets wherever people live, work or visit. Need for provision may increase in time as developments take place, population needs change, and through welcoming visitors to the area. This is an opportune time to set a strategy for promoting access to toilet facilities where they are needed.

Further information is available here:

Local Toilets Strategy | Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council ([rctcbc.gov.uk](http://rctcbc.gov.uk))

Recent Community Services Scrutiny Committee report is here: Agenda for Community Services Scrutiny Committee on Monday, 10th July, 2023, 5.00 pm - Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council ([moderngov.co.uk](http://moderngov.co.uk))

1.d) Please outline where delivery of this proposal is affected by legislation or other drivers such as code of practice.

The Public Health (Wales) Act 2017 received Royal Assent in July 2017 and brings together a range of practical actions for improving and protecting health. Part 8 of the Act introduces provision of toilets and specifically Local Toilet Strategies.

The aim of Part 8 is to ensure each local authority in Wales assesses the needs of its community in relation to toilets, and then takes a strategic and transparent approach to best meet that need. The intended effect is to improve the planning of provision so that any such decisions are taken within the

overall context of meeting the communities' identified needs. A strategic approach will also help to mitigate any negative impacts of changes to provision.

The local authority has responsibility to:

- • assess the community's need for toilets, including changing facilities for babies and changing places facilities for people with disabilities;
- • provide details of how to meet the identified need;
- • produce a Local Toilets Strategy; and
- • review the strategy, update and publicise revisions.

Local authorities had to prepare and publish their initial strategies by 31 May 2019. The duty to prepare a Local Toilets Strategy does not require local authorities to provide and maintain public toilets directly. The local authority must take a strategic view on how facilities can be provided and accessed by their local population. Upon review of this strategy, Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council is required to publish a statement of progress.

1.e) Please outline who this proposal affects:

- Service users
- Employees
- Wider community

## **SECTION 2 – SCREENING TEST – IS A FULL EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT REQUIRED?**

Screening is used to determine whether the initiative has positive, negative or neutral impacts upon protected groups. Where negative impacts are identified for protected groups then a full Equality Impact Assessment is required.

Please provide as much detail as possible of how the proposal will impact on the following groups, this may not necessarily be negative, but may impact on a group with a particular characteristic in a specific way.

### **Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011**

The Public Sector Equality Duty requires the Council to have “due regard” to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advance equality of opportunity between different groups; and foster good relations between different groups. Please take an intersectional approach in recognising an individual may have more than one protected characteristic.

<b><u>Protected Characteristics</u></b>	<b>Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts</b>	<b>Provide detail of the impact</b>	<b>What evidence has been used to support this view?</b>
<b>Age</b> ( <i>Specific age groups i.e. young people or older people</i> )	Positive	The Council has continued the level of investment to maintain the current provision. The Council does not charge for use of its public toilets. Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council has continued to invest in facilities since the 2019 Local Toilets Strategy with an extensive enhancement and refurbishments programme The Strategy's two objectives are: To enhance and maximise the use of existing facilities; Promote additional, appropriate and accessible facilities.	RCT Community Insights Report  Cwm Taf Ageing Well in Wales Plan  Cwm Taf Wellbeing Plan 2023-2028.  Cwm Taf Joint Commissioning Statement for Older People's Services 2015/25 - among the themes identified are accessing accessible information and advice and

<u>Protected Characteristics</u>	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts	Provide detail of the impact	What evidence has been used to support this view?
		<p>OLDER PEOPLE</p> <p>19.2% (45,995) of residents in RCT are aged 65+.</p> <p>Research shows that loneliness has a similar effect on people's mortality as smoking 15 cigarettes a day and it is linked to poor mental health, and depression as well as health service use. Having access to local toilet facilities that meet users needs reduces loneliness and social isolation.</p> <p>Age Friendly Communities are ones, which meet the needs of everyone irrespective of their age. In respect of older people such communities should encourage and enable them to engage with their surroundings and continue to engage socially within those communities as this will</p>	<p>addressing social isolation and loneliness, both of which are supported by the actions identified in the Strategy.</p> <p>Age Friendly Wales Strategy</p> <p>RCT Corporate Plan - Making a Difference 2020-24</p> <p>Consultation responses</p>

<b><u>Protected Characteristics</u></b>	<b>Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts</b>	<b>Provide detail of the impact</b>	<b>What evidence has been used to support this view?</b>
		<p>help to maintain their health, well-being and independence.</p> <p>The Local Toilets Strategy will contribute to the above by providing access to free, accessible and local toilet facilities.</p>	
<p><b>Disability</b> <i>(people with visible and non-visible disabilities or long-term health conditions)</i></p>	<p>Positive</p>	<p>The Council has a legal duty to anticipate the needs of disabled customers and to take reasonable steps to remove or reduce barriers that prevent disabled people from accessing services and should take positive steps to ensure that disabled people can access services including making reasonable adjustments.</p> <p>People with disabilities often face the challenge of being medicalised and this has increased significantly since Covid as governments developed the Shielded Patients Lists, now replaced with the Clinically Extremely Vulnerable List which has inadvertently reinforced a medical</p>	<p>The Strategic Equality Plan identifies the need to better understand communities and the barriers that exist for them especially young people, disabled people and those from ethnic minority backgrounds.</p> <p>UK Research on the impact of Mental Illness (2011) indicated that it has a significant impact on life expectancy and that people who suffered from enduring and severe mental illness die on average 10 years earlier than the general population. In addition it</p>

<b><u>Protected Characteristics</u></b>	<b>Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts</b>	<b>Provide detail of the impact</b>	<b>What evidence has been used to support this view?</b>
		<p>view of disability. A medical model defines disabled people by their medical conditions and has been criticised for primarily focusing on what people cannot do because of their differences, rather than what they can do if barriers in society were removed.</p> <p>This Strategy outlines the Council's investment in fully accessible disabled toilets and changing place facilities.</p> <p>Library services as outlined in this Strategy and Action Plan have been developed to ensure accessibility for all residents removing the barriers wherever possible that prevent them from engaging with our services.</p> <p>People's health and wellbeing are determined by a range of factors. This strategy outlines the maintenance and investment in local toilets to offer access to facilities and information.</p>	<p>should be noted that people who live in deprived communities have the poorest mental health and wellbeing and this reflects the situation in RCT.</p> <p>A number of recent Welsh Government Reports highlight the impact of Covid 19 on people with disabilities including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 'Locked out: liberating disabled people's lives and rights in Wales beyond COVID-19' (July 2021)</li> <li>- 'Potential impact of COVID-19 on disabled people'</li> <li>- 'Coronavirus (COVID-19) and the impact on disabled people in Wales'</li> </ul> <p>These reports draw attention to the impact of Covid on the employment of disabled people and the need to</p>

<u>Protected Characteristics</u>	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts	Provide detail of the impact	What evidence has been used to support this view?
		<p><b>REDUCING BARRIERS</b></p> <p>Accessible disabled toilet facilities and changing place facilities have been been and continue to be invested in.</p> <p><b>ADVICE, GUIDANCE AND INFORMATION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Locations of Council owned toilets have been reviewed and are detailed in Appendix 2 and included on the Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council website. The Council will improve awareness and information available on toilet provision in the area by ensuring the information on the Council’s website is up to date and will regularly update the “Lle” open access data repository with Welsh Government. The Council will consider displaying the toilet logo sticker at entrances to publicly accessible Council buildings</li> </ul>	<p>address the huge gap between the employment of people who are disabled in comparison to the able-bodied. Of the 1,392,000 people currently in employment in Wales, 14.5% are disabled according to the Equality Act 2010 definition.</p> <p>Chwarae Teg's report - 'Society is the disability' highlights the intersectionality between gender and disability noting that 'barriers disabled men and women face impact them differently, and there are some barriers that are unique to disabled women.'</p> <p>Consultation responses</p>

<u>Protected Characteristics</u>	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts	Provide detail of the impact	What evidence has been used to support this view?
		<p>and any community venue or private businesses that agree. Work with our local Neighbourhood Networks and Town Centre partners encouraging those partners who already allow access to display the toilet logo sticker and encourage others to do the same.</p> <p>We will encourage health provider premises to also participate and display the toilet logo stickers.</p> <p><b>INTERSECTIONALITY</b></p> <p>It is recognised that some people have more than one protected characteristic and that there is an intersectionality between these that affect people's personal experiences. In such cases it is not possible to generalise the impact. However, we are committed to ensure that local toilet facilities meet the needs of people who have a range of protected characteristics and this will be achieved by working with partners who have specialist knowledge and</p>	

<u>Protected Characteristics</u>	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts	Provide detail of the impact	What evidence has been used to support this view?
		<p>services so that the offer locally effect the needs of residents however complex they are.</p> <p>OLDER/DISABLED</p> <p>Around 42,000 people in Wales, most of whom are over 65, suffer from dementia. The Strategy will consider dementia-friendly improvements such as increasing colour contrast in Council owned toilet facilities.</p>	
<p><b>Gender Reassignment</b> <i>(anybody who's gender identity or gender expression is different to the sex they were assigned at birth including non-binary identities)</i></p>	Positive	<p>The Equality and Human Rights Commission reported in 2017 that transgender people were more likely to live in poverty and more likely to suffer with serious mental health issues than the general population.</p> <p>This Strategy and Action Plan will have a positive effect on people with this protected characteristic:</p>	<p>Strategic Equality Plan and Public Sector Equality Duty</p> <p>Consultation responses</p>

<u>Protected Characteristics</u>	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts	Provide detail of the impact	What evidence has been used to support this view?
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- considering toilet provision for the LGBTQI+ community</li> <li>- Considering the ratio of male to female facilities, whereby 1:2 is the ideal ratio as outlined by WG.</li> </ul>	
<b>Marriage or Civil Partnership</b> <i>(people who are married or in a civil partnership)</i>	Positive	The focus on maintenance and investment in facilities and promotion, means that people who are married or in civil partnerships will have access to free local toilet provision.	Strategic Equality Plan and Public Sector Equality Duty  Consultation responses
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b> <i>(women who are pregnant/on maternity leave)</i>	Positive	The Strategy outlines the provision of free local toilet facilities as well as baby changing rooms to ensure that expectant mothers, mothers and their babies are able to visit and engage in social activity.	Strategic Equality Plan and Public Sector Equality Duty  Consultation responses
<b>Race</b> <i>(ethnic and racial groups i.e. minority ethnic groups, Gypsy, Roma and Travellers)</i>	Positive	In encouraging people from diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds to participate in the cultural life of the community, thereby meeting the standard outlined in Article 27 of the Declaration of Human Rights: ‘Everyone has the right to freely participate in the cultural life of the	Strategic Equality Plan and Public Sector Equality Duty.  WG's Race Equality Action Plan outlines the challenges faced by people of a Black and Minority Ethnic

<b><u>Protected Characteristics</u></b>	<b>Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts</b>	<b>Provide detail of the impact</b>	<b>What evidence has been used to support this view?</b>
		community'; the focus on maintenance and investment in facilities and promotion, means that all ethnic and racial groups will have access to free local toilet provision.	<p>background in Wales and identifies actions against key priorities that will address this.</p> <p>In its response to WG's 'An anti-racist Wales' the Runnymede Trust has highlighted that 'racial inequalities persist in almost every arena of British society from birth to death.' Therefore listening to people and understanding their specific experiences and needs will help to ensure that we can provide an inclusive environment with access to services required by this diverse group.</p> <p>Consultation responses</p>
<b>Religion or Belief</b> <i>(people with different religions and philosophical beliefs including people with no beliefs)</i>	Positive	The focus on maintenance and investment in facilities and promotion, means that people with different religions and philosophical beliefs, including those with no beliefs, will	Strategic Equality Plan and Public Sector Equality Duty RCT Community Insights indicates the religion/beliefs of residents as follows:

<b><u>Protected Characteristics</u></b>	<b>Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts</b>	<b>Provide detail of the impact</b>	<b>What evidence has been used to support this view?</b>
		have access to free local toilet provision.	Buddhist 520 Hindu 400 Jewish 85 Muslim 1,060 Sikh 185 Other religions 870 Christian 118,390  Consultation responses
<b>Sex</b> <i>(women and men, girls and boys)</i>	Positive	Consideration will be given to the ratio of male and female facilities, whereby 1:2 is the ideal ratio as outlined by WG.	Strategic Equality Plan Public Sector Equality Duty  Consultation responses
<b>Sexual Orientation</b> <i>(bisexual, gay, lesbian, straight)</i>	Positive	Consideration will also be given to facilities for the LGBTQI+ community	LGBTQ in Britain (2018) - Stonewall's report based on YouGov research with 5000 lesbian, gay, bi and trans (LGBT) people across England, Scotland and Wales about their life in Britain today

In addition, due to Council commitments made to the following groups of people we would like you to consider impacts upon them:

	<b>Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts</b>	<b>Provide detail of the impact</b>	<b>What evidence has been used to support this view?</b>
<b>Armed Forces Community</b> <i>(anyone who is serving, has served, family members and the bereaved)</i>	Positive	<p>Personnel who leave the Armed Forces and their families can face a plethora of challenges including housing, healthcare, employment, social isolation and loneliness.</p> <p>The focus on maintenance and investment in facilities and promotion, means that the Armed Forces community will have free access to local toilet provision.</p>	<p>WG Veterans Action Plan</p> <p>'Giving and Receiving Supporting and investing in our Armed Forces Community in Wales.'</p> <p>Strategic Equality Plan Public Sector Duty</p> <p>Consultation responses</p>
<b>Carers</b> <i>(anyone of any age who provides unpaid care)</i>	Positive	<p>The focus on maintenance and investment in facilities and promotion, means that the Carers will have free access to local toilet provision for themselves and those that they care for.</p>	<p>State of Caring Report 2021 (Wales):</p> <p>36% of carers in Wales said they were struggling to make ends meet;</p> <p>A further 23% are or have been in debt as a result of caring; and</p>

			<p>8% cannot afford utility bills such as electricity, gas, water or telephone bills</p> <p>In response to this survey 36% of carers in Wales indicated that their financial situation had worsened as a result of Covid.</p> <p>40% of carers in Wales indicated that they did not know what services were available in their area.</p> <p>36% of carers in Wales are deemed to be 'chronically lonely' i.e. often or always lonely.</p> <p>Consultation responses</p>
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If the initial screening test has identified negative impacts then a full equality impact assessment (section 4) **must** be undertaken. However, if after undertaking the above screening test you determine a full equality impact assessment is not relevant please provide an adequate explanation below:

The Local Toilets Strategy 2023 - 2028 is designed to meet the needs of all residents and ensure that toilet facilities provided meet the needs of residents and visitors across the county borough. The provision of toilets has implications for public and individual health, transportation, crime prevention, urban design, economic and cultural development and social equality and accessibility. It is an important factor in delivering a 'people friendly' environment for everyone who visits shops, leisure and entertainment venues,

sports facilities, parks and green spaces, and everyone who travels around and to our borough. Toilets can make an impact on the comfort of individuals and families who visit our public spaces and their perception of the area as a desirable place to visit.

This strategy contributes towards achieving accessible and clean toilets wherever people live, work or visit. Need for provision may increase in time as developments take place, population needs change, and through welcoming visitors to the area. This is an opportune time to set a strategy for promoting access to toilet facilities where they are needed.

In preparing the initial Local Toilets Strategy, due regard was made to demographic and health data from the Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough area, detailed in Appendix 1 in the draft Strategy..

Engagement with other local authority services, community groups and the public was undertaken to understand what is currently available and how any gaps can be mitigated.

A public consultation was undertaken for four weeks between 17 October and 14 November 2018, to assess the needs of residents, and people working or visiting the county borough. Engagement mechanisms included:

- • Online via the Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council website and social media;
- • Email alerts and correspondence;
- • Face to face discussions at various community venues;
- • Paper questionnaires requested by groups and residents.

A range of organisations were engaged with by sending the questionnaires directly to them for response, including Rhondda Cynon Taf Access Group, RNIB, Wales Council for the Deaf, Cwm Taf Community Health Council, 50+ Forums and Rhondda Cynon Taf Older Persons Advisory Group, RCT Citizens Panel, RCTCBC Tourism Service, Third Sector Organisations, Carers Support Project, Town Centre Chambers of Trade and business forums etc.

On behalf of all Welsh local authorities, Caerphilly County Borough Council contacted all of the national retailers who operate across the country, as part of a collaborative exercise across Wales to establish whether these businesses would be prepared to be part of the strategy by allowing their toilet facilities to be used by non-customers, signposted via national websites and phone apps and agreeing to display a sticker showing the national toilet logo. The results were disappointing as no businesses that were contacted volunteered to offer their toilet facilities to the public and to be mapped. Council intends to revisit this exercise at a local community level at the next review date in 2025.

A statutory 12-weeks public consultation was undertaken between 4 February and 29 April 2019 on the initial draft Local Toilets Strategy. Engagement mechanisms and organisations engaged with were replicated as per the Assessment of Need public consultation. Engagement also took place with the Community Liaison Committee and a draft strategy was scrutinised by the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee.

A total of 60 respondents completed the questionnaire and the responses received were considered when producing the Local Toilets Strategy.

As part of the review of the original 2019 Local Toilets Strategy a further period of local community consultation was undertaken from July 2022 – October 2022. This is detailed in a later section of this revised strategy.

Are you happy you have sufficient evidence to justify your decision? Yes  No

Name: Caroline O'Neill

Position: Head of Arts, Culture and Library Services

Date: 10/08/2023

Please forward a copy of this completed screening form to the Diversity and Inclusion Team.

PLEASE NOTE – there is a separate impact assessment for Welsh Language. This must also be completed for proposals.

Section 3 Socio-economic Duty needs only to be completed if proposals are of a strategic nature or when reviewing previous strategic decisions. Definition of a 'strategic nature' is available on page 6 of the [Preparing for the Commencement of the Socio-economic Duty Welsh Government Guidance](#).

### **SECTION 3 – SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY (STRATEGIC DECISIONS ONLY)**

The Socio-economic Duty gives us an opportunity to do things differently and put tackling inequality genuinely at the heart of key decision making. Socio-economic disadvantage means living on a low income compared to others in Wales, with little or no accumulated wealth, leading to greater material deprivation, restricting the ability to access basic goods and services.

Please consider these additional vulnerable groups and the impact your proposal may or may not have on them:

- Single parents and vulnerable families
- Pensioners
- Looked after children
- Homeless people
- Students
- Single adult households

- People living in the most deprived areas in Wales
- People with low literacy and numeracy
- People who have experienced the asylum system
- People misusing substances
- People of all ages leaving a care setting
- People involved in the criminal justice system

<u>Socio-economic disadvantage</u>	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts	Provide detail of the impact	What evidence has been used to support this view?
<p><b>Low Income/<a href="#">Income Poverty</a></b>  <i>(cannot afford to maintain regular payments such as bills, food, clothing, transport etc.)</i></p>	<p>Positive</p>	<p>CHILDREN IN LOW INCOME HOMES</p> <p>22% of children aged 0-19 years in RCT are in relative low income poverty.</p> <p>Having access to free and accessible information and toilet facilities that meet their needs will have a positive impact on these children and their families, ensuring that they are not disadvantaged compared to those from wealthier socio-economic backgrounds.</p> <p>LONE PARENTS</p> <p>Lone parent households are the ones most often affected by low income poverty.</p> <p>Having access to free and accessible information and toilet facilities that meet their needs will have a positive impact on these children and their</p>	<p>Community Insight RCT 2022 - data on levels of poverty.</p> <p>Joseph Rowntree Foundation's Poverty in Wales Report indicates that of the 600,000 children and working age adults living in poverty in Wales over 6 out of 10 are in a working household where at least 1 person is working full-time. Half of the working families in Wales are reliant on Universal Credit and this does not lift them out of poverty.</p> <p>N</p>

<u>Socio-economic disadvantage</u>	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts	Provide detail of the impact	What evidence has been used to support this view?
		<p>families, ensuring that they are not disadvantaged compared to those from wealthier socio-economic backgrounds.</p> <p>PENSIONERS</p> <p>Pensioners are another group that can be affected by low income poverty.</p> <p>Access to information and advice on facilities will be provided through mapping locations and updating the information on the Council and the WG 'Lle' website. Signage will be used to denote public toilet facilities too.</p> <p>STUDENTS</p> <p>The intention to promote, maintain and invest in local toilet facilities will benefit students and researchers who are residents of RCT as well as those who live further afield accessing their</p>	

<u>Socio-economic disadvantage</u>	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts	Provide detail of the impact	What evidence has been used to support this view?
		<p>educational needs with the county borough.</p> <p>CHILDREN AND PEOPLE WITH LOW LITERACY</p> <p>Access to information and advice on facilities will be provided through mapping locations and updating the information on the Council and the WG 'Lle' website. Signage will be used to denote public toilet facilities too.</p>	
<p><b>Low and / or No Wealth</b> <i>(enough money to meet basic living costs and pay bills but have no savings to deal with any unexpected spends and no provisions for the future)</i></p>	Positive	The focus on maintenance and investment in facilities and promotion, means that those with low or no wealth will have free access to local toilet provision for themselves and those that they care for.	As above
<p><b>Material Deprivation</b> <i>(unable to access basic goods and services i.e. financial products like life insurance, repair/replace broken</i></p>	Positive	The Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019 details deprivation as lack of access to opportunities and resources which we might expect in our community; income, employment, health, education, access to services,	WPLS Annual Return and WG WPLS Assessment 2019/20

<b><u>Socio-economic disadvantage</u></b>	<b>Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts</b>	<b>Provide detail of the impact</b>	<b>What evidence has been used to support this view?</b>
<i>electrical goods, warm home, hobbies etc.)</i>		<p>housing, community safety and physical environment.</p> <p>Having local toilet facilities has a positive effect on individuals and their families who experience material deprivation in the same way as they have a positive effect on people who have no/low wealth or who live in poverty.</p>	

<b><u>Socio-economic disadvantage</u></b>	<b>Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts</b>	<b>Provide detail of the impact</b>	<b>What evidence has been used to support this view?</b>
<p><b><u>Area Deprivation</u></b>  <i>(where you live (rural areas), where you work (accessibility of public transport))</i></p>	<p>Positive</p>	<p>The Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) highlights 8 categories that are assessed when considering levels of deprivation.</p> <p>To achieve this strategy, the following will be completed which will have a positive impact on area deprivation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify the current level of provision of public toilets;</li> <li>•analyse the findings of the completed assessment of need activities for toilets available for use by the public in their area;</li> <li>•consider the requirements of the general population;</li> <li>•identify the needs for particular user groups;</li> <li>•identify any gaps in current provision;</li> <li>• support Welsh Government initiatives to improve information available on toilet facilities;</li> <li>•provide information setting out the steps which the local authority proposes to take to meet this need,</li> </ul>	<p>WIMD</p> <p>10% of the most deprived LSOAs in Wales are in RCT; 29 are in the top 20%; 45 are in the top 30%.</p> <p>NOMIS - the most recent data indicates thatL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 43,700 people in RCT are economically inactive (29.2% of the population).</li> <li>- 6,055 individuals are claiming out-of-work benefits</li> <li>- 22% of households in RCT with working age adults are workless households</li> <li>- the gross weekly pay for males who work full-time is below the Welsh average</li> </ul>

		and any other information which the council considers appropriate.	
<p><b>Socio-economic background</b> <i>(social class i.e. parents education, employment and income)</i></p>	Positive	<p>Under the Equality Act 2010, the Council has a legal duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination and to have due regard to the desirability of reducing socio-economic inequalities.</p> <p>The focus on maintenance and investment in facilities and promotion, means that all socio-economic backgrounds will have free access to local toilet provision for themselves.</p>	<p>The Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD).</p> <p>Well- Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.</p> <p>Equality Act 2010.</p> <p>RCTCBC Corporate Plan 2020 - 2024.</p>
<p><b>Socio-economic disadvantage</b> <i>(What cumulative impact will the proposal have on people or groups because of their protected characteristic(s) or vulnerability or because they are already disadvantaged)</i></p>	Positive	<p>Under the Equality Act 2010, the Council has a legal duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination and to have due regard to the desirability of reducing socio-economic inequalities.</p> <p>This proposal will have a positive impact on all residents affected by socio-economic disadvantage (which has been exacerbated by Covid for those who were already on low</p>	<p>The Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD).</p> <p>Well- Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.</p> <p>Equality Act 2010.</p>

		<p>incomes and who were relatively likely to be living in poverty).</p> <p>The focus on maintenance and investment in facilities and promotion, means that all those that at a socio-economic disadvantage will have free access to local toilet provision..</p>	<p>RCTCBC Corporate Plan 2020 - 2024.</p>
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## SECTION 4 – FULL EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

You should use the information gathered at the screening stage to assist you in identifying possible negative/adverse impacts and clearly identify which groups are affected.

- 4.a) In terms of disproportionate/negative/adverse impacts that the proposal may have on a protected group, outline the steps that will be taken to reduce or mitigate the impact for each group identified. **Attach a separate action plan where impacts are substantial.**
- 4.b) If ways of reducing the impact have been identified but are not possible, please explain why they are not possible.
- 4.c) Give sufficient detail of data or research that has led to your reasoning, in particular, the sources used for establishing the demographics of service users/staff.
- 4.d) Give details of how you engaged with service users/staff on the proposals and the steps taken to avoid any disproportionate impact on a protected group. Explain how you have used feedback to influence your decision.
- 4.e) Are you satisfied that the engagement process complies with the requirements of the Statutory Equality and Socio-economic Duties?  
Yes                       No

## SECTION 5 – MONITORING AND REVIEW

5a) Please outline below how the implementation of the proposal will be monitored:

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council will prepare an interim progress report setting out the steps taken in line with the strategy every two years, commencing from the date of the last published strategy. The interim progress report will be published within six months of the end date of the two year period. Following the publication of this Revised Local Toilets Strategy in May 2023, progress will be considered, and a report prepared and published before the end of November 2025.

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council may review its strategy at any time following which it must publish a statement of the steps which it has taken in accordance with the strategy. Following a review, if it is decided to revise the strategy it will publish the revised strategy and then prepare an interim progress report covering the two-year period commencing from the date of publication.

5b) When is the evaluation of the proposal due to be reviewed?

November 2025

5c) Who is responsible for the monitoring and review of the proposal?

The Community Development Team will monitor the plan and reports will be provided to the Community Services Scrutiny Committee as and when required.

5d) How will the results of the monitoring be used to develop future proposals?

The results of the monitoring will inform the development of a new Strategy and action plan to be published in 2028.

## SECTION 6 – REVIEW

As part of the Impact Assessment process all proposals that fall within the definition of ‘Key Decisions’ must be submitted to the Review Panel. This panel is made up of officers from across Council Services and acts as a critical friend before your proposal is finalised and published for SLT/Cabinet approval.

If this proposal is a Key Decision please forward your impact assessment to [Councilbusiness@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:Councilbusiness@rctcbc.gov.uk) for a Review Panel to be organised to discuss your proposal. The EqlA guidance document provides more information on what a Key Decision is.

It is important to keep a record of this process so that you can demonstrate how you have considered equality and socio-economic outcomes. Please ensure you update the relevant sections below

<b>Officer Review Panel Comments</b>	<b>Date Considered</b>	<b>Brief description of any amendments made following Officer Review Panel considerations</b>
<b>Consultation Comments</b>	<b>Date Considered</b>	<b>Brief description of any amendments made following consultation</b>

## **SECTION 6 – SUMMARY OF IMPACTS FOR THE PROPOSAL**

Provide below a summary of the impact assessment. This summary should be included in the equality and socio-economic impact section of the Cabinet report template. The impact assessment should be published alongside the report.

## **SECTION 7 – AUTHORISATIONS**

Lead Officer:

Name:

Position:

Date:

I recommend that the proposal:

- Is implemented with no amendments
- Is implemented taking into account the mitigating actions outlined
- Is rejected due to disproportionate negative impacts on protected groups or socio-economic disadvantage

Head of Service/Director Approval:

Name:

Position:

Date:

Please submit this impact assessment with any SLT/Cabinet Reports.



# Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council

## Local Toilets Strategy 2023 - 2028



This document is available in Welsh / Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg

## Contents

Introduction	Page 3
Why do we need a strategy for providing toilet facilities?	Page 3
The Aims of this strategy	Page 5
Reviewing the strategy	Page 5
How has this strategy been developed?	Page 5
How does it fit with other Council priorities and plans?	Page 6
Who provides public toilets?	Page 7
Mapping locations	Page 9
What we learned from the Community Consultation	Page 10
What we learned from the 12 weeks public consultation	Page 11
What the Council can do to address the feedback	Page 14
Objectives and Action Plan to implement the Local Toilets Strategy	Page 16
Potential options that have been considered and discounted, with explanation	Page 17
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough area Demographic and Health Data	Appendix 1
List of the current provision of council owned facilities	Appendix 2
Community Consultation results	Appendix 3

## **Introduction**

Provision of, and access to toilets is an issue that affects public health. Accessible, clean toilets that are well located in places such as town centres, parks, cycle trails and walking routes can help encourage people to take exercise and stay more physically active. This has clear health and economic benefits. Conversely, toilets that are poorly designed, inadequately maintained and inappropriately located can create an atmosphere of neglect that discourages use. A lack of adequate toilet facilities can impact on a person's physical and mental health, as well as affecting the wider environmental health of the population.

Toilets for public use matter to everybody and remain a high-profile issue. They are, however, even more important to certain groups within society, including older people, people with disabilities, people with particular needs (including certain medical problems), women, children and young people and their families. These groups can be disproportionately affected by poor provision; for example, poor provision is understood to have particular negative impacts on older people, as some may be less likely to leave their homes without having confidence that adequate facilities will be available to them. This can contribute to increased social isolation and inactivity, as well as affecting people's ability to maintain independence and dignity in later life.

To deliver a strategic approach to the provision of toilets across Wales, the Public Health (Wales) Act 2017 requires local authorities to publish a Local Toilets Strategy for its area. The first Local Toilets Strategy for Rhondda Cynon Taf was published in 2019 and in line with statutory requirements it was stated that this should be reviewed within a year of each ordinary election for the area. The next election date following this original publication was Thursday 5 May 2022, therefore the latest date for the review is 4 May 2023.

The provision of toilets has implications for public and individual health, transportation, crime prevention, urban design, economic and cultural development and social equality and accessibility. It is an important factor in delivering a 'people friendly' environment for everyone who visits shops, leisure and entertainment venues, sports facilities, parks and green spaces, and everyone who travels around and to our borough. Toilets can make an impact on the comfort of individuals and families who visit our public spaces and their perception of the area as a desirable place to visit.

## **Why do we need a strategy for providing toilet facilities?**

This strategy contributes towards achieving accessible and clean toilets wherever people live, work or visit. Need for provision may increase in time as developments take place, population needs change, and through welcoming visitors to the area. This is an opportune time to set a strategy for promoting access to toilet facilities where they are needed.

The Public Health (Wales) Act 2017 received Royal Assent in July 2017 and brings together a range of practical actions for improving and protecting health. Part 8 of the Act introduces provision of toilets and specifically Local Toilet Strategies.

The aim of Part 8 is to ensure each local authority in Wales assesses the needs of its community in relation to toilets, and then takes a strategic and transparent approach to best meet that need. The intended effect is to improve the planning of provision so that any such decisions are taken within the overall context of meeting the communities' identified needs. A strategic approach will also help to mitigate any negative impacts of changes to provision.

The local authority has responsibility to:

- assess the community's need for toilets, including changing facilities for babies and changing places facilities for people with disabilities;
- provide details of how to meet the identified need;
- produce a Local Toilets Strategy; and
- review the strategy, update and publicise revisions.

Local authorities had to prepare and publish their initial strategies by 31 May 2019. The duty to prepare a Local Toilets Strategy does not require local authorities to provide and maintain public toilets directly. The local authority must take a strategic view on how facilities can be provided and accessed by their local population. Upon review of this strategy, Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council is required to publish a statement of progress.

The Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing of Wales. Public sectors have a duty to consider the long-term impact of the decisions they make and the Act puts in place a sustainable development principle which tells public bodies how to meet their duty under the Act. The principle is made up of five ways of working to guide how public services should work to deliver for people:

**Long term:** the importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long term needs.

**Prevention:** how acting to prevent problems occurring or getting worse may help public bodies meet their objectives.

**Integration:** considering how public bodies' wellbeing objectives may impact upon each of the wellbeing goals, on their other objectives, or on the objectives of other public bodies.

**Collaboration:** acting in collaboration with any other person (or different parts of the body itself) that could help the body meet its wellbeing objectives.

**Involvement:** the importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the wellbeing goals, and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the area which the body serves.

Due regard has been made to the above five ways of working when preparing, reviewing, consulting on and publishing this strategy.

## **The Aims of this strategy**

This strategy aims to review the quality and quantity of local toilets throughout the county borough and to provide or facilitate the provision of clean, safe, accessible and sustainable toilets for residents and visitors to the area at locations where the need for such facilities has been identified.

To achieve this strategy, we will:

- identify the current level of provision of public toilets;
- analyse the findings of the completed assessment of need activities for toilets available for use by the public in their area;
- consider the requirements of the general population;
- identify the needs for particular user groups;
- identify any gaps in current provision;
- support Welsh Government initiatives to improve information available on toilet facilities;
- provide information setting out the steps which the local authority proposes to take to meet this need, and any other information which the council considers appropriate.

In reviewing the initial strategy, we have reviewed the above and considered any relevant updates and changes.

## **Reviewing the strategy**

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council will prepare an interim progress report setting out the steps taken in line with the strategy every two years, commencing from the date of the last published strategy. The interim progress report will be published within six months of the end date of the two year period. Following the publication of this Revised Local Toilets Strategy in May 2023, progress will be considered, and a report prepared and published before the end of November 2025.

The strategy will be reviewed within a year of each ordinary election for its area in line with statutory guidance. The next election date in Wales following publication of the revised strategy is May 2027, therefore the latest date for review is May 2028. If no changes are made to the strategy following the post-election review, then Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council will publish an interim progress statement covering a two-year period commencing from the date of the last election.

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council may review its strategy at any time following which it must publish a statement of the steps which it has taken in accordance with the strategy. Following a review, if it is decided to revise the strategy it will publish the revised strategy and then prepare an interim progress report covering the two-year period commencing from the date of publication.

## **How has this strategy been developed?**

In preparing the initial Local Toilets Strategy, due regard was made to demographic and health data from the Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough area, detailed in Appendix 1.

Engagement with other local authority services, community groups and the public was undertaken to understand what is currently available and how any gaps can be mitigated.

A public consultation was undertaken for four weeks between 17 October and 14 November 2018, to assess the needs of residents, and people working or visiting the county borough. Engagement mechanisms included:

- Online via the Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council website and social media;
- Email alerts and correspondence;
- Face to face discussions at various community venues;
- Paper questionnaires requested by groups and residents.

A range of organisations were engaged with by sending the questionnaires directly to them for response, including Rhondda Cynon Taf Access Group, RNIB, Wales Council for the Deaf, Cwm Taf Community Health Council, 50+ Forums and Rhondda Cynon Taf Older Persons Advisory Group, RCT Citizens Panel, RCTCBC Tourism Service, Third Sector Organisations, Carers Support Project, Town Centre Chambers of Trade and business forums etc.

A total of 97 respondents completed the questionnaire and have been included in the analysis. These have been used to influence the content of this strategy.

On behalf of all Welsh local authorities, Caerphilly County Borough Council contacted all of the national retailers who operate across the country, as part of a collaborative exercise across Wales to establish whether these businesses would be prepared to be part of the strategy by allowing their toilet facilities to be used by non-customers, signposted via national websites and phone apps and agreeing to display a sticker showing the national toilet logo. The results were disappointing as no businesses that were contacted volunteered to offer their toilet facilities to the public and to be mapped. Council intends to revisit this exercise at a local community level at the next review date in 2025.

A statutory 12-weeks public consultation was undertaken between 4 February and 29 April 2019 on the initial draft Local Toilets Strategy. Engagement mechanisms and organisations engaged with were replicated as per the Assessment of Need public consultation. Engagement also took place with the Community Liaison Committee and a draft strategy was scrutinised by the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee.

A total of 60 respondents completed the questionnaire and the responses received were considered when producing the Local Toilets Strategy.

As part of the review of the original 2019 Local Toilets Strategy a further period of local community consultation was undertaken from July 2022 – October 2022. This is detailed in a later section of this revised strategy.

## **How does it fit with other Council priorities and plans?**

In order to succeed, our Local Toilet Strategy needs to integrate with other existing priorities and plans such as the Council's Corporate Plan 2020-2024 and the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Wellbeing Plan 2023-2028.

The Council's Corporate Plan, "Making a Difference" sets out a clear vision to make Rhondda Cynon Taf 'the best place in Wales to live, work and play, where people and businesses are independent,

healthy and prosperous'. The Council is committed to delivering three main priorities under this plan, as follows: ensuring **people** are independent, healthy and successful; creating **places** where people are proud to live, work and play; and enabling **prosperity** by creating the opportunity for people and businesses to be innovative, entrepreneurial, and to fulfil their potential and prosper. The Local Toilets Strategy can contribute to these, supporting a number of the objectives within the Council's Corporate Plan 2020-2024 to make the vision a reality.

The Cwm Taf Morgannwg Wellbeing Plan 2023-28: 'A More Equal Cwm Taf Morgannwg', contains two objectives: **Healthy Local Neighbourhoods** – where our communities are inclusive and feel cohesive and people feel safe, supported, and valued; and, **Sustainable and Resilient Local Neighbourhoods** – where we understand and respond to the risk of climate change to our communities, valuing, managing and enjoying our green and blue spaces responsibly.

These plans set the strategic direction at a regional and local level. The Local Toilets Strategy cuts across a number of these objectives and aims to support them. Publicly accessible toilets are needed by every one of us at some point where we live, work or visit and so the provision touches on all areas of the Council in some way.

## **Who provides public toilets?**

Providing toilet facilities in separate buildings has been the traditional model for providing local toilet facilities. There are benefits from co-located provision in existing buildings wherever possible, to reduce some of the negative aspects such as anti-social behaviour and vandalism and the associated costs.

Commercial providers in retail centres with extended opening hours and in entertainment venues and visitor attractions have an important role to play in satisfying the needs of their customers and the public as a whole. The case for publicly accessible toilets in a wider variety of community buildings will become stronger. This draws in a wider range of potential partners to manage and fund them.

The provision of local toilets for public use is not a statutory requirement of local authorities in Wales. Due to financial cutbacks within local government, Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council, like other local authorities, may need to close traditional toilet facilities. This strategy aims to mitigate potential impacts by making toilets in more Council facilities available for public use and to work with the private sector to help promote their facilities.

The Council has continued the level of investment to maintain the current provision. The Council does not charge for use of its public toilets.

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council has continued to invest in facilities since the 2019 Local Toilets Strategy with an extensive enhancement and refurbishments programme, completed at the following venues and totalling in excess of circa £315,000:

- Canolfan Pennar Community Resilience Hub – as part of a significant development programme the installation of a changing place and toilet facilities including an accessible toilet in 2019.
- Porth Plaza Community Resilience Hub – as part of a significant development programme the installation of a changing place and toilet facilities including an accessible toilet in 2020.

- Llys Cadwyn Community Resilience Hub – as part of a significant development programme the installation of a changing place and toilet facilities including an accessible toilet in 2020.
- Rhondda Heritage Park – refurbishment during 2020 included the installation of a changing place, which although resulted in the reduction of the number of male toilets, also allowed for the provision of a fully accessible disabled toilet.
- Dare Valley Country Park – as part of the extensive development of an amenities block extension during 2021, the installation of a changing place, toilets and showers. Further improvements to accessibility were undertaken during early 2023.
- National Lido of Wales, Lido Ponty / Ynysangharad War Memorial Park - following the devastation caused by Storm Dennis, complete refurbishment of the facilities was required which included the toilet facilities and the installation of a changing place during 2021.

In addition to the enhancements to the Council owned and managed facilities above, three further developments have taken place working with key community partners:

- Yr Hwb Community Resilience Hub - benefited from significant development under RCTCBC Community Asset Transfer arrangements, which included an accessible toilet open to the public during extended opening hours. This venue launched in July 2019.
- Cynon Linc - significant development of a Community Asset Transfer in August 2020, with construction works commencing and concluding in October 2021. This facility is open to the public during building opening hours and attached to a GP surgery. It includes fully accessible toilets, and a changing place with toilet and shower.
- Arts Factory - RCTCBC supported the installation of facilities that provide beyond what is normally expected in a standard accessible toilet, including electric hoisting and adult changing bed in Spring 2021.

This investment demonstrates the Council's commitment to invest where it matters to communities.

Local authorities are not the only providers of toilet facilities and other providers and options are available. A combination of these forms part of this strategy and helps to achieve the actions described later.

- **Council owned:** Includes standalone, purpose built buildings providing separate areas for Female, Male, and wherever possible, an accessible unit for disabled people and baby changing facilities. The Council is responsible for the maintenance, management and cleaning of these facilities.
- **Within council facilities, offices and green spaces:** Toilet facilities may be made available to the general public where the individual location, access and circumstances allow, such as libraries, sports centres and some Council offices. There are also toilets located at some parks and countryside settings. This is part of a wider need to ensure that all services offered are accessible by all members of the community.
- **Changing places:** Facilities for individuals with a range of disabilities and limited mobility who are unable to access standard disabled toilets. These facilities feature specialist equipment including hoists and changing benches to enable these individuals to access public toilets in their communities. There are a number of changing places available in Rhondda Cynon Taf,

some in Council owned buildings and others in commercial settings. For full details of available facilities please see: [changing-places.org/find](http://changing-places.org/find)

A link to the public conveniences provided by the council is [here](#).

Please also refer to Appendix 2 for a list of the current provision of Council owned facilities. This includes traditional public conveniences, urinals, automated/chargeable facilities (20p fee) and changing places for disabled individuals.

- **Commercial / Retail sector provision:** Many toilet facilities provided by commercial and retail businesses have been primarily or solely for use by customers. Some shop managers in town centres understand that people come in to use the toilets and recognise that this may lead to people purchasing whilst inside. Most visitor and tourist attractions and entertainment venues such as cinemas provide toilet facilities. Members of the public depend on such facilities.
- **Voluntary schemes via private providers:** A survey was undertaken on an All-Wales basis with larger national retailers to seek an agreement in principle that their toilet facilities could be used by the general public. Those that responded declined such an agreement.

## Mapping locations

This is an important part of our strategy as it will ensure that people who need to use a toilet facility can easily access information about the location, opening times, accessibility and type of facilities available.

Participating premises will display a sticker in a prominent place, indicating that toilets are available for the public. The sticker will display the logo stipulated by Welsh Government, as below:



The British Toilet Association also recommends that signs be fitted on the outside with information like opening hours, contact information for reporting problems, and the specific facilities provided inside, such as whether there are baby changing facilities available.

Once we have identified the toilets that will be publicised as available for use by the general public, Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council will prepare a dataset to a given specification and make it available as open data on the Council website. The dataset will consist of the location and specified characteristics of the identified toilets. This data will also be included in the Welsh Government system and joined to other local authority datasets to produce the national dataset for the National Toilet Map hosted by Data Map Wales. Data Map Wales is a geo-portal that serves as a hub for data and information covering a wide spectrum of topics, but primarily around the environment. All-Wales maps are generated based on the datasets provided by local authorities that can be configured to focus on the national picture, or on local areas. The data included will be available as an open data service accessible to everyone. The link can be accessed [here](#).

The Council will periodically review and update the Welsh Government data repository to allow access to accurate information by guide and map publishers, residents and visitors.

The Welsh Government has not developed an app, as many people are unable to use a smartphone for a number of reasons. It is more appropriate to focus on ensuring the information is available online through a wide range of websites and via traditional offline methods.

For data to be classed as open data it must be made available under an open licence. Within the Public Sector this can be achieved by publishing data under the Open Government Licence (OGL).

As the data provided by local authorities is to be made available as open data, it will be available for reuse by third parties, either directly from the local authority's own website, or via the joined dataset behind the Data Map Wales map. This might include other online map services, app developers or commercial interests, as well as being available for reuse by other public sector organisations.

The dataset will be available in Welsh and English. The public will be able to see and search the data as it appears on the Data Map Wales website, to see the whole of Wales or to look at particular areas.

## **What we learned from the Community Consultation**

As part of the review of the RCTCBC Local Toilets Strategy, local community consultation took place during the period July 2022 – October 2022, allowing for the opportunity to review the findings from the 2019 assessment of public need. 130 people participated who agreed that the key points captured in the 2019 Local Toilets Strategy remained valid with nothing further to add.

A summary of the 2022 local community consultation is included in Appendix 3.

The 2019 Local Toilet Strategy conducted a four-week period starting in October 2018, an Assessment of Need public consultation was conducted across Rhondda Cynon Taf. This involved engaging with communities and a wide range of interested parties to consider the requirements of the general population, to consider the needs for particular user groups, to review existing toilet facilities, and to identify any gaps in current provision.

The engagement was conducted via a range of approaches including feedback from the public, social media, online content and emails, surveys and questionnaires, attendance at community venues.

Respondents were asked a wide variety of questions relating to areas most visited within Rhondda Cynon Taf; times of visiting; details of toilet and changing facility provision; attractions and parks most visited; followed by a series of statements relating to facilities which respondents were asked to agree or disagree with.

Some key findings from the surveys are provided below:

- 91% of respondents are a resident of Rhondda Cynon Taf.

- Respondents rated facilities in the towns and villages visited most often as primarily inadequate, as opposed to the other options available, during early morning, between 9am and 6pm, during evenings, Sundays and Bank Holidays.
- In relation to attractions and parks visited most frequently, respondents felt that toilet provision was adequate during the day but inadequate early morning and evenings. Both changing facilities for young children and people with disabilities were deemed to be inadequate during the day with none available early morning and evenings.
- There is concern about feeling unsafe using public toilets in relation to facilities being used for anti-social behaviour and drug activity.
- Lack of changing facilities for individuals with disabilities was highlighted with specific mention in relation to both children and adults.
- Respondents felt that there are too few public toilet facilities available and that the location of facilities is not convenient.
- Many respondents indicated that there is not enough information on where facilities are located.
- The lack of facilities has stopped many respondents from visiting certain locations.
- Respondents indicated that facilities are not open at the times that they are needed.
- The majority of respondents felt that toilets should be free to use.

Respondents were asked what they would prefer as the best way to find out about where the nearest toilet and changing facilities are located when they are out and about. 64% of respondents said that a sticker or poster displayed in the window of premises where facilities are available was their preferred option, with 18% preferring the option of an app on their mobile phone. 18% of respondents indicated preference to other options, with suggestions including a website, social media, signposts in prominent locations, a toilet map, local paper, etc.

Respondents were asked whether their response to the survey had been influenced (positively or negatively) by the range of protected characteristics as specified in the Equality Act 2010. The issues raised included gender identity, gender reassignment, problems relating to a range of disabilities and health issues, use of facilities by parents with children, issues regarding disabled toilet facilities not being of adequate size for wheelchairs to enter, requirement of hoists for disabled individuals, etc.

## **What we learned from the 2019 twelve week public consultation**

In preparation of the 2019 Local Toilet Strategy a 12-week period of public consultation starting in February 2019 was conducted across Rhondda Cynon Taf. This involved engaging with communities and a wide range of interested parties to consult on the draft Local Toilets Strategy, which had been produced following the Assessment of Need public consultation. The 12-week public consultation asked a number of questions, including if respondents felt that the strategy provides clear information to help understand why the actions proposed in the strategy are necessary; if they agree with the actions under Objective 1: to enhance and maximise the use of existing facilities; and if they agree with the actions under Objective 2: to promote additional, appropriate and accessible facilities and to provide further information if they felt that there was anything missing from the proposed objectives and supporting actions.

The engagement was conducted using a range of approaches including feedback from the public, social media, online content and emails, surveys and questionnaires.

The full results of the 12 weeks public consultation are provided in Appendix 3 of this strategy.

Some key findings from the public consultation are provided below:

- 92% of respondents are a resident of Rhondda Cynon Taf.
- 8% represent a local group or organisation, 7% were a local Elected Member and 7% work in Rhondda Cynon Taf borough.
- 72% of respondents feel that the strategy provides clear information to help understand why the actions proposed in the strategy are necessary, with 25% indicating they feel that the strategy partially provides clear information to help understand why the actions proposed in the strategy are necessary. Explanations provided to substantiate responses to this question included reference to only one set of free public toilets in Pontypridd which is deemed inadequate;; opinion that public conveniences should be provided by the borough Council and not local businesses and others; concerns that people more likely to need facilities are not able to access online information.
- 83% of respondents agree with the actions under Objective 1: to enhance and maximise the use of existing facilities, with 17% partially agreeing. Reasons provided included current facilities are either closed or close early; café facilities do not always like their toilets being used without being a customer; a query regarding why local businesses/private sector should cover the cost of providing toilets when they already pay business rates to the council;; concern regarding some disabled toilets not being suitable for dual purpose of baby changing facilities; request for improved opening times of toilets in Pontypridd town centre and better physical signage to existing public toilets in Pontypridd town centre.
- 90% of respondents agree with the actions under Objective 2: to promote additional, appropriate and accessible facilities, with 10% partially agreeing. Respondents expressed concerns that toilets open at night could be used by drug users and be unsafe and vandalised; availability of facilities in towns on the weekends and evenings; concern regarding some disabled toilets not being suitable for dual purpose of baby changing facilities; request for permanent toilet provision in the town centre, especially at night time.

Respondents were asked if there was anything missing from the objectives and supporting actions and some of the responses include: concern about changing facilities for disabled adults and older children; use of social media to ensure members of the public have access to availability on toilets immediately; more facilities for young mothers and babies and disabled people requested; mapping 3<sup>rd</sup> sector organisations that allow access to facilities; remuneration for local businesses to allow members of the public to use their facilities; concern about assistance alarms provision in disabled toilets particularly in remote locations.

No respondents indicated that they felt that their response to the survey had been influenced (positively or negatively) by the range of protected characteristics as specified in the Equality Act 2010.

28% of respondents indicated that they have a long-term illness or health problem and 22% advised that they have a disability.

During the 12-week public consultation, feedback on the draft strategy was provided by the Community Liaison Committee and the Authority's Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee.

Members of the Community Liaison Committee considered the draft strategy and put their questions and observations forward. A Member commented on the lack of provision within some towns and communities, and where there were provisions, Members felt that they were inadequate for many reasons.

In relation to availability in stores such as supermarkets, Members felt that more could be done to locate them at the front of the store rather than in out of the place areas, including at the rear of stores.

A Member felt there to be a need for premises to advertise that they have these facilities for public to see. Members of the Community Liaison Committee resolved to acknowledge the draft Local Toilets strategy and wished that their views and comments would be taken into consideration when preparing the final Strategy.

The Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee received the draft Local Toilets Strategy and broadly supported it. Members felt that in respect of baby changing facilities and disabled toilet facilities, numbers of each were low and that more could be done to encourage private sector and other groups to work together to make these facilities available where they are needed. There was also comment on the need to increase general provision of toilet facilities across the County Borough.

A Member questioned the provision of toilet facilities for local events and whether there is a set number of toilets in ratio to people attending. It was explained that there is an Events Advisory Group and this would be considered under their remit.

The Chair highlighted the importance of these facilities to residents of the County Borough and that knowing that there is toilet provision in many areas can make a difference in a person leaving their home, especially for people with certain health conditions. This will in turn have a positive effect on their wellbeing. Members also felt strongly that the lack of advertising is a problem as many residents are unaware of any facilities that offer the use of their toilet provision for public use. A Member commented about promotion of the Welsh Government toilet logo sticker, to ensure that the public understand that it means that members of the public are welcome to use facilities where the sticker is displayed.

A Member also raised an issue regarding the location of facilities within stores as this could be seen as an obstacle to people. It was felt that work needed to be carried out to encourage stores to locate them at the front of the store.

Comments were received in relation to having more toilet facilities available in cafes, bars, shops, etc. that would increase footfall to that business although it was recognised there will be costs involved in providing and maintaining facilities. Discussion will be needed with businesses. It was felt that increased toilet provision will be good for town centre footfall and the economy and "unlock the potential" of our towns.

Members of the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee resolved to acknowledge the draft Local Toilets strategy and wished that their views and comments would be taken into consideration when preparing the final Strategy.

## **What the Council can do to address the feedback**

- **Ensure adequate facilities for the local population:** Our town centres are popular destinations identified by the assessment of need and they are the main transport hub for people arriving by train or bus. Provision should therefore focus in areas where most people visit and should be taken into consideration when reviewing future developments in and around town centres.
- **Facilities accessible to all, at all practicable locations:** Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council will promote equal opportunities to provide appropriate, accessible and effective facilities to all sections of the community without prejudice or bias. Increase the provision of toilet facilities, including changing places and gender neutral toilets where possible, by exploring opportunities in existing and future developments. Radar keys for access to disabled facilities are supplied by the Council's One4All Centres.
- **Facilities suitable for the location:** Council provision will be primarily for local people, shoppers and visitors in busy areas and some larger parks. Parks attract residents and tourists and can often include children's play areas. There may not be other facilities close by which people can use whilst using the park. Local shopping centres generally include mixed retail shopping which are often small to medium size businesses and are areas where people are encouraged to stay for a length of time.
- **Easily found facilities with good direction signage and individual facility information signs:** Locations of Council owned toilets have been reviewed and are detailed in Appendix 2 and included on the Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council website. The Council will improve awareness and information available on toilet provision in the area by ensuring the information on the Council's website is up to date and will regularly update the "Lle" open access data repository with Welsh Government.

The Council will consider displaying the toilet logo sticker at entrances to publicly accessible Council buildings and any community venue or private businesses that agree. Work with our local Neighbourhood Networks and Town Centre partners encouraging those partners who already allow access to display the toilet logo sticker and encourage others to do the same.

We will encourage health provider premises to also participate and display the toilet logo sticker.

- **To provide accessible information:** The Council's website includes information about the individual facilities across the borough. The information will be kept up to date so it can be used by the Council and other interested parties. We will also regularly update the "Lle" open access data repository with Welsh Government. Promote newly available changing places and Community Hubs, as well as the Libraries and Leisure Facilities who already allow access.

- **Tourist related provision:** The number of tourists and people from outside the area visiting Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough and our visitor attractions throughout the year places additional demands for toilet facilities. The Welsh Government’s Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024 outlines that “investment is to be targeted at access arrangements, changing places and disabled facilities (with the commitment dovetailing) with the new Tourism priorities document ‘Welcome to Wales 2020-2025’.” The size of facilities should be adequate for the number of people expected to use the toilets without overcrowding or undue waiting times. A standard of provision based on pedestrian flow count footfall figures could be considered where it is practicable to do so. This could inform considerations if additional toilet facilities are required at specific times.
- **Evening services at key locations where specific need is established:** Anti-social and drug related misuse, vandalism and graffiti damage to Council public toilet facilities have previously led to most facilities being locked up at a scheduled time in the early evening. Facilities provided by shops and other businesses are usually limited to their opening hours for safety and security reasons. Due regard will be made to such issues when undertaking future reviews.

Development of the night-time economy and changes in town centres mean that they are also leisure and entertainment hubs rather than predominantly centres for retail and commercial trade.

Night-time economy growth can lead to an increase in drug and alcohol related anti-social behaviour. It is recognised that publicly accessible facilities should be in close proximity to key night-time gathering areas, such as taxi ranks, car parks, railway stations, and bus stations / stops. The provision of temporary facilities can be considered during major events and at particularly busy times.

- **Clean, safe and well-maintained facilities:** Council maintained toilet facilities are subject to rigorous routine cleansing operations. Council owned public toilets and urinals in RCT are cleaned Monday – Saturday with all facilities except disabled toilets closed on Sundays. Regular maintenance is carried out when needed and in response to reported defects.
- **Non-charging:** The Council will not charge the public to use toilet facilities in its buildings where there is provision. Private business providers are entitled to charge, if they deem it appropriate. Radar keys for access to disabled facilities are supplied by the Council’s One4All Centres.
- **Liaise with Town and Community Councils, business groups and other stakeholders:** Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council will work with the Town and Community Council’s and community and voluntary groups to explore how to provide toilet facilities in as many locations as possible using links established via our local Neighbourhood Networks and Town Centre partners to facilitate this.

- **Maximising availability in partnership:** The Council will work with local businesses and community groups to promote use of their toilet facilities and will explore options to increase local toilet provision through sponsorship, advertising, partnership working and any community asset transfer opportunities.
- **Provision of adequate toilet facilities by the promoters / organisers at one-off events:** Adequate toilet facilities for people attending one-off outdoor events need to be considered, through temporary installations or through the use of existing facilities at or near the event location. This must be in agreement with the Council. The Events Safety Advisory Group provides guidance on temporary toilet facilities for event organisers and to ensure compliance with relevant regulations. Consideration will be given to provision of facilities to meet specific equality needs.
- **Sustainable provision within the available budget:** Improvements and developments to date demonstrate the Council's commitment to invest where it matters to communities. It will continue, where possible, to maintain the current provision of toilets and secure every opportunity to improve and enhance facilities in the County Borough.

## **Objectives and Action Plan to implement the Local Toilets Strategy**

The following two objectives have been developed with supporting actions:

### **1. To enhance and maximise the use of existing facilities;**

- Promote equal opportunities to provide appropriate, accessible and effective facilities to all sections of the community, including changing facilities for babies and changing places for disabled persons. Looking for opportunities to include these provisions in any new (Council owned) developments where possible, and publicising more widely the already available facilities.
- Explore the option of displaying the toilet logo sticker at the entrances of appropriate publicly accessible Council buildings, community venues and private businesses that agree to participate.
- Work with Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board and health care providers to encourage them to make facilities available to the public, to participate in the mapping scheme, and to display the toilet logo sticker in appropriate premises.
- Improve awareness and information available on toilet provision in the borough by updating information on the Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council website and regularly update the "Lle" open access data repository with Welsh Government.
- Explore providing improved physical signage to existing facilities, in particular to consider new accessible signage to tackle discrimination.
- Review cleansing operations and standards periodically to ensure effective provision within allocated resources.

- Review opening hours of existing facilities with a view to exploring alternative opening hours where practicable.
- Work with the Police, members of the public, community groups and other interested parties, to ensure that facilities are as safe as possible.

## **2. Promote additional, appropriate and accessible facilities;**

- Explore all available options, including working with the private sector, community and voluntary groups and Town and Community Councils, to make more local toilets and changing facilities available where they are most needed. Working with our local Neighbourhood Network partners and consider any opportunities for community asset transfers where available.
- Work with partners to improve toilet provision close to key night-time gathering points, including taxi ranks, car parks, railway stations, bus stations and stops.
- Ensure that the Events Safety Advisory Group continues to provide advice and guidance on appropriate and accessible temporary toilet facilities to be provided at organised events to meet the diverse needs of the community.
- Consider dementia-friendly improvements such as increasing colour contrast in Council owned toilet facilities.
- Consider ratio of male to female facilities, whereby 1:2 is the ideal ratio as outlined by WG.
- Consider toilet provision for the LGBTQI+ community
- In line with the Council's Tourism Strategy, consider the required toilet facilities to serve the needs of visitors.
- Consider allowing members of the public free access to additional toilet facilities in publicly accessible Council buildings and promote this using the toilet logo stickers.
- Promotion of all available facilities using the toilet logo sticker with associated public awareness raising campaign, so community members recognise the logo and have an understanding that premises that display it allow the public access to their toilet facilities.

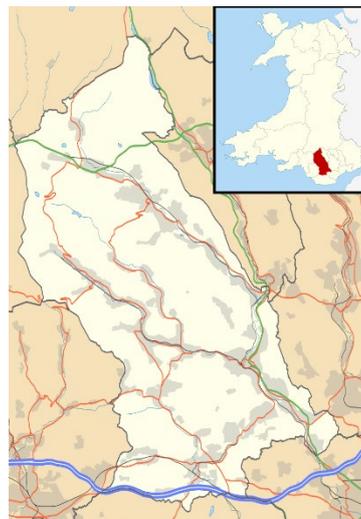
## **Potential options that have been considered and discounted, with explanation**

- **Letting policies:** The Council could consider options to introduce a clause in leasing agreements which means that when the Council is letting its own property to a suitable business, for example, a café or shop, then the leasing agreement would include the requirement to include public access to the toilet facilities. However, it is envisaged that tenants may raise concerns around cleaning, maintenance and availability and if such a requirement were to be introduced, it could deter prospective tenants from progressing with the lease.
- **Late Night Levy:** The Council could explore the options and powers to introduce a charge for premises that have a late alcohol licence. However, in April 2017 a House of Commons review was conducted of the levy and led to the suggestion that it should be scrapped. Only 8 Local

Authorities in England and Wales have introduced a levy since 2013 and one has since removed it. There are no current levies in place in Wales. The levy did not generate the amount of income expected, including when introduced in areas with a large night-time economy. Many premises have late licences but use them infrequently for specific events or at certain times a year. It is understood that where the levy was introduced, many premises applied to change their hours rather than pay the levy. Before introducing a levy there is a need for wide consultation and discussions with the Police and Crime Commissioner and approval is required by Licensing Committee and Council. At least 70% of any income raised would go to the Police, 30% can be used by the local authority. Uses of the income have to be in line with specific objectives and publicised each year. Toilet provision for the night-time economy could be included under public nuisance and be part of a number of initiatives relating to crime reduction, public safety, etc. That would reduce the amount of income available for that function. After considering the costs involved in implementing, monitoring and reporting on such a scheme, a night-time levy is not considered to be a feasible option for Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council as there is not the volume of premises to generate enough income to make a levy worthwhile.,

- **Planning Conditions:** Some larger commercial developments that will include cafes, bars, shops, entertainment venues, etc. could possibly be required, as a planning condition, to allow general public access to any toilet facilities that are being built in the premises; however, there is no policy support at national level for imposing planning conditions to allow the general public access to toilet facilities at private commercial premises. Any such condition would fail the test that it must be necessary to make the development acceptable from a planning point of view.

## **Appendix 1 – Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough area Demographic and Health Data**



### **The area:**

Rhondda Cynon Taf is the second largest Local Authority in Wales, being 424km<sup>2</sup> in size and forming part of the South Wales Valleys and Cardiff Capital Regions. The county borough was formed in 1996 following the abolition of the county of Mid Glamorgan. Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council was formed by the merger of the former Mid Glamorgan districts of Rhondda, Cynon Valley and Taf Ely (with the exceptions of Creigiau and Pentyrch, which were added to Cardiff). The county consists of five valleys: the Rhondda Fawr, the Rhondda Fach, Cynon, Taf and Ely Valleys. Rhondda Cynon Taf is bordered by Merthyr Tydfil and Caerphilly to the east, Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan to the south, Bridgend and Neath Port Talbot to the west and Powys to the north. Its key towns are Pontypridd, Aberdare, Llantrisant with Talbot Green, Mountain Ash, Porth, Tonypany, Treorchy and Ferndale, with other settlements and towns including Pontyclun, Maerdy, Hirwaun, Llanharan, and Tonyrefail.

The area developed from the discovery and mining, primarily for export, of high-quality Welsh coals. The landscape was historically dominated by coal-waste heaps and deep mine pitheads. The history of the area remains evident, having influenced the layout of settlements with many of the roads lined with semi-ribbon development of closely packed Victorian terraces of houses which have given the valley communities their distinctive appearance. Given the unique landscape there are topographical constraints associated with travelling within the region. However there is an established road and rail network serving the area including the M4 to the south, the Heads of the Valley A465 to the north and the A470 running through the region, as well as rail links serving many of the major towns in the area. There are plans afoot to improve on this through the creation of the Cardiff Capital Region supported by the Metro transport system, which will provide increased connectivity within the region and beyond. Welsh Government have in recent years established a Valleys Taskforce, which will work alongside the Cardiff Capital Region to ensure the likes of the Metro positively impact the region and also serve to promote the area as a tourism destination.

### **Local Population:**

There are 241, 873 people living in Rhondda Cynon Taf. This is projected to increase to 252,418 by 2040. The numbers aged 65 years and over will grow significantly, with the biggest increase in those aged 90 years and over.

### **Poverty and deprivation:**

In Rhondda Cynon Taf it is acknowledged that there are areas with higher levels of deprivation. The Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) 2019 is the most comprehensive measure of multiple deprivation available. The concept of multiple deprivation upon which the WIMD 2019 is based is that separate types of deprivation exist, which are separately recognised and measurable. The WIMD 2019 therefore consists of eight types, or domains, of deprivation, each of which contains a number of individual measures, or indicators (1).

The information below shows the number of people in RCT living in neighbourhoods ranked among the most and least deprived 20% of neighbourhoods in Wales on WIMD 2019.

Number of people in RCT Wide living in the most deprived 20% of areas in Wales	Number of people in RCT Wide living in the least deprived 20% of areas in Wales
65,208	37,061
27.0% (Wales average = 19.5%)	15.4% (Wales average = 19.8%)
Source: Welsh Government (Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019)	

Working age Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) Benefits are benefits payable to all people of working age (16-64) who need additional financial support due to low income, worklessness, poor health, caring responsibilities, bereavement or disability.

Universal Credit (UC) has replaced legacy benefits for new claimants. The UC rollout began in April 2013, with single jobseeker's moving on to the new benefit and by March 2016 the rollout intensified to include other groups who are out of work or on low incomes. The chart below shows a breakdown of the proportion of UC claimants that are either in employment or unemployed across RCT and comparator areas.

Housing Benefit (HB) can be claimed by a person if they are liable to pay rent and if they are on a low income and provides a measure of the number of households in poverty.

Income Support is a measure of people of working age with low incomes and is a means tested benefit payable to people aged over 16 working less than 16 hours a week and having less money coming in than the law says they need to live on.

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<sup>1</sup> The eight domains of deprivation included are: Employment, Income, Health, Education, Community safety, Housing, Physical environment, Access to services.

Universal Credit claimants – in Employment (Oct-22)	Universal Credit claimants – Unemployed (Oct-22)	
7,874	14,284	
5.2% (Wales average = 5.6%)	9.5% (Wales average = 9.0%)	
Income Support (IS) claimants (May-22)	Housing Benefit claimants (Aug-22)	Universal Credit claimants (Nov-22)
1,178	10,653	22,484
0.8% (Wales average = 0.6%)	10.3% (Wales average = 9.9%)	15.0% (Wales average = 14.8%)
Source: Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)		

### **Vulnerable Groups: Disability**

When considering the numbers of people in Rhondda Cynon Taf who are living with a disability the following measures are used: the claiming Attendance Allowance, Personal Independence Payments and Disability Living Allowance.

Attendance Allowance is payable to people over the age of 65 who are so severely disabled, physically or mentally, that they need a great deal of help with personal care or supervision.

Until April 2013, Disability Living Allowance was payable to children and adults in or out of work who are below the age of 65 and who were disabled, and required help with personal care or had walking difficulties. It is a non-means tested benefit, which means it is not affected by income. From April 2013 Personal Independence Payments (PIP) have been introduced to replace Disability Living Allowance for all new claimants. PIP helps with some of the extra costs caused by long-term disability, ill-health or terminal ill-health.

Attendance Allowance claimants (May-22)	Personal Independence Payment (PIP) (Oct-22)	PIP Males (Oct-22)	PIP Females (Oct-22)
6,617	21,203	9,517	11,689
14.2% of people (Wales= 13.8%)	14.1% of people (Wales= 11.6%)	12.9% of males (Wales= 10.6%)	15.3% of females (Wales= 12.7%)
PIP with mental health conditions (Oct-22)	PIP with respiratory disease (Oct-22)	Households on Universal Credit - Limited Capability for Work Entitlement (Aug-22)	Disability Living Allowance claimants (May-22)
7,092	917	5,113	7,776
4.7% of people (Wales= 4.0%)	0.6% of people (Wales= 0.4%)	4.9% of households (Wales= 4.6%)	3.2% of people (Wales= 2.5%)

### **Vulnerable Groups: Pensioners**

There are two measures included: pensioners without access to transport and pensioners in poverty.

Pensioners without access to transport are those with no access to a car or van. The dataset only includes pensioners living in private households.

Pensioners in poverty are those in receipt of Pension Credit. Pension Credit provides financial help for people aged 60 or over whose income is below a certain level set by the law.

Private pensioner households with no car or van (Census 2011)	Households of one pensioner (Census 2011)	State pension claimant (DWP:Nov-20)	Pension credit claimant (DWP: May-22)
10,481	13,173	43,841	6,785
49.0% of pensioner households (Wales average = 38.5%)	61.6% of pensioner households (Wales average = 59.7%)	93.8% (Wales average = 92.5%)	14.5% (Wales average = 12.3%)

### **Health and Wellbeing: General Health and limiting long term illness:**

This section provides information on general levels of health, focusing on the number of people living in neighbourhoods with poor levels of overall health (health deprivation hotspots) and the number of people with a limiting long-term illness, with breakdowns by housing tenure for RCT. Health deprivation ‘hotspots’ are neighbourhoods ranked among the most deprived 20% of neighbourhoods. The domain measures morbidity, disability and premature mortality. All neighbourhoods are grouped into ten equal sized groups “deciles”; the 10% of neighbourhoods with the highest level of health deprivation are grouped in decile 10, and so on with the 10% of neighbourhoods with the lowest levels of health deprivation grouped in decile 1.

Number of people living in health deprivation ‘hotspots’ (Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation 2014)	People with a limiting long-term illness (Census 2011)	People aged 16-64 with a limiting long-term illness (Census 2011)
99,242	60,589	30,029
42.0% (Wales average = 19.3%)	25.8% (Wales= 22.7%)	20.0% (Wales= 16.9%)
People living in owner occupied housing, with a Limiting long-term illness (Census 2011)	People living in social rented housing, with a Limiting long-term illness (Census 2011)	People living in private rented housing, with a Limiting long-term illness (Census 2011)
44,800	11,119	5,620
25.4% have a limiting long-term illness (Wales average = 20.9%)	36.0% have a limiting long-term illness (Wales average = 32.0%)	25.7% have a limiting long-term illness (Wales average = 20.6%)

Data taken from Community Insight profile for RCT Wide OCSI/HACT 2021

**Appendix 2 – List of the current provision of council owned facilities**

Location (Type)	Opening Hours	Facilities			
		Male	Female	Baby Change	Disabled (Radar Key)
Lake Street, Ferndale (Public Toilet)	9-5 Monday – Saturday; Closed Sundays and Bank Holidays	Yes	Yes	No	No
Maerdy Park, Maerdy (Public Toilet)	9-5 Monday – Saturday; Closed Sundays and Bank Holidays	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Bridgend Square, Pentre (Public Toilet)	9-5 Monday – Saturday; Closed Sundays and Bank Holidays	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
91 Tylacelyn Road, Penygraig (Public Toilet)	9-5 Monday – Saturday; Closed Sundays and Bank Holidays	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Pontypridd Road, Porth (Public Toilet)	9-5 Monday – Saturday; Closed Sundays and Bank Holidays	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Hannah Street, Porth (Public Toilet)	9-5 Monday – Saturday; Closed Sundays and Bank Holidays	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Dunraven Street, Tonypandy (Public Toilet)	9-5 Monday – Saturday; Closed Sundays and Bank Holidays	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Bute Street, Treherbert (Public Toilet)	9-5 Monday – Saturday; Closed Sundays and Bank Holidays	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Off Station Road, Treorchy (Public Toilet)	9-5 Monday – Saturday; Closed Sundays and Bank Holidays	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Ynyshir Road, Ynyshir (Public Toilet)	9-5 Monday – Saturday; Closed Sundays and Bank Holidays	Yes	Yes	No	No
Aberdare Bus Station, Duke Street, Aberdare (Public Toilet)	9-5 Monday – Saturday; Closed Sundays and Bank Holidays	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Monk Street (Public Toilet)	9-5 Monday – Saturday; Closed Sundays and Bank Holidays	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Alexandra Terrace, Cwmaman (Public Toilet)	9-5 Monday – Saturday; Closed Sundays and Bank Holidays	Yes	Yes	No	No
Off Kendon Court, Hirwaun (Public Toilet)	9-5 Monday – Saturday; Closed Sundays and Bank Holidays	Yes	Yes	No	No
Oxford Street, Mountain Ash (Public Toilet)	9-5 Monday – Saturday; Closed Sundays and Bank Holidays	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Pontypridd Bus Station (Public Toilet)	9-5 Monday – Saturday; Closed Sundays and Bank Holidays	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Bus Depot, Talbot Road, Talbot Green (Public Toilet)	9-5 Monday – Saturday; Closed Sundays and Bank Holidays	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Windsor Place, Ynysybwl (Public Toilet)	9-5 Monday – Saturday; Closed Sundays and Bank Holidays	Yes	Yes	No	No
Hendrewen Road, Blaencwm (Urinal)	24/7	Yes	No	No	No
Brook Street, Blaenrhondda (Urinal)	24/7	Yes	No	No	No
Cemetery Road, Maerdy (Urinal)	24/7	Yes	No	No	No
Carne Street, Pentre (Urinal)	24/7	Yes	No	No	No
Chepstow Road, Cwmparc (Urinal)	24/7	Yes	No	No	No

De Winton Street, Tonypandy (Urinal)	24/7	Yes	No	No	No
Graig Terrace, Ferndale (Urinal)	24/7	Yes	No	No	No
Rees Street, Gelli (Urinal)	24/7	Yes	No	No	No
Glyncornal Lake, Llwynypia (Urinal)	24/7	Yes	No	No	No
Main Road, Pontygwaith (Urinal)	24/7	Yes	No	No	No
Rheola Bridge, Porth (Urinal)	24/7	Yes	No	No	No
Sandybank, William Street, Ystrad (Urinal)	24/7	Yes	No	No	No
Stag Square, Treorchy (Urinal)	24/7	Yes	No	No	No
Swan Street, Penygraig (Urinal)	24/7	Yes	No	No	No
Cemetery Road, Trealaw (Urinal)	24/7	Yes	No	No	No
Cadwgan Terrace, Trehafod (Urinal)	24/7	Yes	No	No	No
Ynyswen Road, Ynyswen (Urinal)	24/7	Yes	No	No	No
Gelligaled Road, Ystrad (Urinal)	24/7	Yes	No	No	No
Main Road, Coed Ely (Urinal)	24/7	Yes	No	No	No
Broadway, Pontypridd (Urinal)	24/7	Yes	No	No	No
East Road, Tylorstown (Urinal)	24/7	Yes	No	No	No
Penrhys Road/Pleasant View, Tylorstown (Urinal)	24/7	Yes	No	No	No
St Albans Terrace, Tynewydd (Urinal)	24/7	Yes	No	No	No
Aber-Rhondda Road, Ynyshir (Urinal)	24/7	Yes	No	No	No
Bridgend Square (Opposite), Pentre (Urinal)	24/7	Yes	No	No	No

### **Appendix 3 – Community Consultation results**

#### **Rhondda 50+ Forum – 20/7/22 (23 present)**

- Get the basics rights – practical considerations in design of facilities (consider needs of disabled users, those with health needs etc). Key example, hook on the back of the door, shelf for belongings etc
- Cleanliness important
- Lack of bins in toilets
- Disabled toilets not always available

#### **Pontypridd Neighbourhood Network - 9/9/22 (12 present)**

- Increased provision (in Taff Ely)
- For physical activity (walking groups etc) toilet facilities are essential (even if just a portaloo)
- Cleanliness is important to people
- Signposting where toilets are is important as people don't want to ask strangers

#### **CF38 / Salem Chapel Neighbourhood Network - 13/09/22 (14 present)**

- Availability and accessibility of toilets for pregnant women
- Look at availability of a card which allows access to facilities for non-patrons (mentioned anecdote from family member who has such a card)
- Lady out walking came into community venue to use loo during meeting. No female facilities in Tonteg just the urinals. Another attendee talked positively about how welcoming and open the group/venue is as she came in whilst on a walk with her young son to use the toilet and ended up staying to take part in the coffee morning.
- People working in communities (postmen, YEPs colleagues etc) they rely on community venues, council buildings etc to use facilities during working day. Could more be done to promote these facilities – displaying a sign etc.

#### **North Cynon Neighbourhood Network – 22/09/22 (14 present)**

- Businesses and others might be more inclined to open up facilities to public if WG considered offering some financial incentive to do so.
- Opening times of facilities continues to be an issue, although the public can understand the difficulties in terms of managing anti-social behaviour, safety, maintenance/cleaning costs
- Anecdote regarding a lock failing in Aberdare park toilets, no safety pull cord to alert anyone of issue.
- Aberdare Library were offering a key to use toilet there historically but stopped due to abuse of facilities.
- Could a phone code be considered to access facilities, then each user is linked to their visit and may be more responsible for what they do when they use facilities. Need to consider the digital exclusion element here.
- Community Asset Transfer/Community ownership option, works well elsewhere with honesty box system.

### **Tylorstown (Rhondda Fach) Neighbourhood Network – 27/02/22 (12 present)**

- Nearest toilets that people were aware of were in Ynyshir and Ferndale. Nothing present in the Tylorstown area.
- Even the places that are open (in Ynyshir and Ferndale for example) are not cleaned well. All agreed that a replacement is needed to modernise the toilets.
- People have less access to toilets in the mornings and the evenings. It was mentioned that the Toilets behind The Strand in Ferndale are only accessible between the hours of 9am and 5pm.
- Also a lack of toilets that are accessible for those with disabilities.
- It was mentioned that Welfare Hall does let people in to use their toilet facilities if needed but it was mentioned that this could maybe be promoted more. We all agreed that stickers similar to the “breastfeeding friendly” idea would be perfect to have outside venues that are happy to let public members use their bathroom.
- Feedback is similar to what came from original consultation – key issues are around a need to refurbish/upgrade current toilets, alongside better signage to those buildings/shops that are happy to allow members of the public to use their facilities.

### **Gilfach Goch (SW Taf Ely) Neighbourhood Network – 28/09/22 (14 present)**

- All attendees agreed that there remains a significant shortage of available local toilets facilities and that on the whole the consultation information from the original public needs assessment remains valid.
- Toilet facilities are needed in town centres if the public are to be encouraged to visit.
- Many attendees confirmed a number of local premises already informally allow the public to use their facilities: GGCA, Tonyrefail Community shop, the church etc. Although they did suggest this is not without it’s risks in terms of drug activity / anti-social behaviour. Many agreed that it would benefit the public to be made aware of this with the stickers mentioned. The chamber of trade and local school will be key links in this particular area and with many others present are keen to support.

### **Llantrisant and District 50+ Forum IDOP event – 1/10/22 (approx. numbers: 20 directly engaged over 250 in attendance)**

- Many people echoed the concerns that there are not enough facilities locally
- Respondent only lived locally for 3 years and considers local facilities far better than what she is used to in England
- Many felt that businesses should open up facilities, the public would support their businesses as a thank you for the goodwill shown
- Keen to see facilities promoted, like the idea of stickers
- Situation seems the same as previous “assessment of public need” but possibly worse due to pandemic
- Toilets close too early – it’s like we aren’t allowed a life after dark”
- Willing to pay for facilities – like in Barry. Paid for turnstile for entry, with money used for cleansing, maintenance etc.

### **Monday Club, Beddau – 3/10/22 (5 present)**

- Beddau and Tynant library already informally offer their facilities to the public and would be happy to promote this with sticker system
- All agreed it is an important topic and needs to be addressed
- Understand need for partners to contribute and promote what is available

- Pontyclun café 50 toilet mentioned as a good example of a local toilet

#### **OPAG Meeting - 4/10/22 (7 present)**

- Poor provision in Pontypridd considering it is our principal town. People frequently urinating in the street/steps near Sardis Rd. This is the area deemed the gateway to Pontypridd and needs to more appealing/welcoming and clean.
- 20p to use market toilet, people don't carry change anymore – consider a contactless card payment or token option? In this situation person involved then had to visit a national coffee retailer and purchase a coffee as she felt obliged to in order to use toilet.
- Treorchy outdoor toilets to side of library were mentioned as a good example, although lots of young people hanging around blocking access on times.
- Lack of toilets restricts people leaving their homes (older people, those with medical needs etc)
- Greater promotion of available facilities needed.
- When considering producing a card to gain access to toilet facilities there is a stigma with doing this and many people wouldn't want to highlight/publicise their medical condition/vulnerability. Ageing Well Card suggested as a consideration – updating of this. Could work with Older People's Commissioner's team on this?
- Many not keen on automated toilets, feel unsafe – doors opening randomly and people getting trapped etc.

#### **Bryncynon Strategy IDOP event – 5/10/22 (approx. numbers: 10)**

- Limited toilets in local area, no public conveniences as such. Have to go into business etc to use their facilities. In some Pontypridd businesses there is an expectation you purchase something if you go into use the toilet.
- Another stated that Pontypridd businesses are very accommodating, and she has never been denied access – always asks first.
- Many would be keen to see stickers used to promote available facilities and to give them confidence to go in and use facilities.
- Mindful of some people abusing available facilities and this may put businesses and other premises off taking part.
- Unaware Llys Cadwyn facilities available to public.
- Disabled lady doesn't access town centres due to mobility issues but also due to lack of toilets. She feels more comfortable visiting supermarkets where she knows disabled facilities are available, although she stated there should be more than one disabled toilet available.

The consultation highlighted that public toilet provision within the local authority area is a key area of concern for those engaged with, which included a significant number of older people. Specifically, attention was focused on a lack of clear, accessible information identifying the location of public toilets. Participants suggested that it would be helpful for toilet facilities to be more widely promoted, perhaps digitally on the RCT Council website, and many others commented on a lack of promotion of toilets available for public use. Several community organisations who already offer their facilities to the public and passers-by stated that they would happily promote their facilities if this were an option. Notably, it was clear that this issue has significant impact on older peoples'

confidence levels regarding going out into the community, with some stating they or those they knew would avoid visiting certain locations if they were aware toilet facilities were unavailable.