



## **RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **CABINET**

**20 MARCH 2024**

### **'WORKING WITH OUR COMMUNITIES' THE COUNCIL'S DRAFT CORPORATE PLAN 2024-2030**

#### **REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE IN DISCUSSION WITH THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL, COUNCILLOR ANDREW MORGAN OBE**

**AUTHOR: Paul Mee**

#### **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to set out a new draft Corporate Plan from 2024/25 – 2029/30. The draft Plan provides a Vision for the County Borough for 2030 and sets out the Council's Well-being Objectives and the priorities it will focus upon over the following six years.

#### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 2.1 Review the contents of the draft Corporate Plan 2024-30,
- 2.2 Consider the outcome of the consultation and engagement process,
- 2.3 Consider the comments and feedback, following pre-scrutiny by the Council's Overview & Scrutiny Committee, attached at Appendix C.
- 2.4 Subject to 2.1 and 2.2, recommend the draft Corporate Plan to Council for approval at its meeting scheduled for 24<sup>th</sup> April 2024.

#### **3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

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

- Has a clear strategy and set of priorities for future years.
- Informs and directs all the Council's associated strategies and policies.
- Can use this Plan to allocate its resources and ensure action plans are in place to deliver the agreed Well-being Objectives and achieve the outcomes that will make a difference to the people that live, work and visit the County Borough.

- Is well placed to take advantage of future opportunities and meet risks and challenges, particularly in the context of reductions to local authority funding, changes in demography and in the demand for services and legislation.

#### **4. THE CORPORATE PLAN**

4.1 The draft Corporate Plan 2024-2030, attached at Appendix A, seeks to set the overall direction for the Council over the coming six years, describing its vision, purpose and ambition as local authority for the County Borough.

4.2 The Council's proposed vision is for a Rhondda Cynon Taf where:

***'All people, communities, and businesses can grow and live in a healthy, green, safe, vibrant, and inclusive County Borough where they can achieve their full potential in all aspects of their lives and work, both now and in the future'***

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

***'To provide community leadership and deliver high quality public services, working alongside residents, communities and our partners so that people, businesses and the environment can thrive and prosper'***

4.4 It is proposed that the Council is focused on the following four Well-being Objectives

- i. **PEOPLE and COMMUNITIES** - Supporting and empowering RCT residents and communities to live safe, healthy and fulfilling lives.
- ii. **WORK AND BUSINESS** - Helping to strengthen and grow RCT's economy.
- iii. **NATURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT** - A green and clean RCT that improves and protects RCT's environment and nature.
- iv. **CULTURE, HERITAGE AND WELSH LANGUAGE** - Recognising and celebrating RCT's past, present and future.

4.5 The new draft Corporate Plan will build on previous Corporate Plans and be a key part of the Council's budget and performance and delivery planning processes. As a result, the draft Corporate Plan must consider the fact that Rhondda Cynon Taf Council and the wider public sector, continues to face significant financial and other challenges. Budgets are under extreme pressure and demands on our services are increasing, particularly in the light of the impact of increasing cost of living and the legacies of the Covid pandemic.

#### 4.6 RCT is also facing...

- A growing and aging population, many of whom may experience poor health with complex care and support needs.
- The need to attract investment, high quality jobs and support the green economy whilst also addressing the skills gap.
- The impact on lives and the risk to homes and businesses from extreme weather events.
- The need to tackle inequalities in health, education, and work and improve life chances.
- Energy costs, uncertain energy security and higher prices because of supply chain disruptions.

4.7 The Corporate Plan addresses these current and future challenges as well as meeting a legal duty to develop and agree a Well-being Plan. As a consequence of the changing environment in which we work, the new plan has a greater focus on creating and strengthening community capacity and resilience so people are better placed to take responsibility for their own well-being; is more closely aligned with the Sustainable Development principles; has embedded climate change into the business of the Council; is delivering additional social value through our contracts and focussing our attention on tackling health inequalities.

4.8 An early draft Plan was informed by feedback from a wide range of engagement activities from across the Council and its services over the last eighteen months, a review of progress over the life of the current Corporate Plan which also features in the Council's [2022/23 Annual Self Assessment](#) and consideration of the current and future challenges we are facing. This early work was the basis of initial engagement through the 'Lets Talk' platform '[Let's Talk about what Matters to You](#)', feedback from the Cabinet and Managers planning discussions in July 2023 and engagement with the staff on the 'Greenspace' Teams channel.

4.9 Subsequent to this, we put in place wider engagement to develop the Plan and in particular the Council's Vision, Purpose, four Well-being Objectives and associated high level priorities and Our commitments to deliver a well-run Council, see report on the engagement findings at Appendix B.

## **5 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS AND SOCIOECONOMIC DUTY**

5.1 There are no specific equality and diversity and socioeconomic duties because of the recommendations within this report. However, the Plan considers the socioeconomic issues within the County Borough and how these will be addressed. Work in this area will continue as part of the further development of the Plan. The Equalities Impact Assessment and Welsh Language Impact Assessment respect of an early draft of the

Corporate Plan was considered by the Review Panel on 7th March and findings are attached at Appendix D.

## **6 WELSH LANGUAGE IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The Corporate Plan will be available in Welsh. The Welsh Language Impact Assessment in respect of an early draft of the Corporate Plan was considered by the Review Panel on 7th March and the findings are attached at Appendix E. A suggestion to integrate the Welsh Language into the Culture and Heritage Well-being Objective was reinforced by feedback from Y Fforwm Iaith and Cor Cwm Rhondda and has been taken into account in subsequent drafts, the responses from which are attached in Appendix E(i).

## **7 CONSULTATION/ENGAGEMENT/INVOLVEMENT**

- 7.1 This draft Corporate Plan has been informed by listening to and hearing what our residents of all ages, communities, partners, and staff have been telling us across a wide range of engagement. This approach will continue during the development of the plan.
- 7.2 The draft Corporate Plan has been formally subject to two phases of engagement:
- Phase 1 – between 18th September and 4th December 2023
  - Phase 2 – between 8th December and 29th January 2024, which also included an invitation to all elected Members to engage more widely through an item in the Members' Newsletter 18th December edition and also consideration by the Council's Joint Consultative Committee at its meeting [on 20th December 2023](#).
- 7.3 The feedback from the engagement is set out in Appendix B. Council staff were encouraged to feedback their thoughts on the draft Corporate Plan via the Council's intranet site, via their line managers and in team meetings which a staff survey indicated was their preference.
- 7.4 The Overview & Scrutiny Committee pre-scrutinised an early draft of the new Corporate Plan at its [meeting on 29th January 2024](#). There was a constructive and productive debate, and the feedback has been considered as part of the development of the draft Corporate Plan.
- 7.5 The feedback from the engagement in respect of the high-level strategy was positive with a clear mandate that supports the Council's Vision and a move to four Well-being Objectives, which align with the four pillars of Sustainable Development.
- 7.6 It was also clear that residents value their public services and some expressed concern about the high level of ambition within the Plan given

resources available. Some responses indicated that they would like to see more detail, which we will make available during the life of the Plan. Other key feedback themes emerging were the Environment, Infrastructure, Community and Education. Responses also contained suggestions that will inform our work as we continue to progress the detailed work to deliver our plan and we will continue to engage with people and communities of interest.

7.7 Feedback also included general comments about the Council, how it works and communicates and engages with residents and communities.

7.8 The feedback to date has been considered in the continuing development of the Plan and because of this feedback, the content of the Corporate Plan has evolved to incorporate the salient points raised. We are continuing to consider any feedback received following the end of the formal engagement.

## **8 FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)**

8.1 The draft Corporate Plan 2024-2030 will be set within the context of the budget setting process for 2024/25. Any investments set out in the Plan will be considered as part of Medium-Term Financial Planning arrangements to ensure that spending priorities are aligned, where appropriate, with the Plan.

## **9 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 The Cabinet has responsibility for the overall strategic direction of the Council and for formulating the Corporate Plan and duties under the [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#) and the [Local Government and Elections \(Wales\) Act 2021](#).

## **10 LINKS TO THE CORPORATE PLAN AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT.**

10.1 This report proposes a new set of corporate priorities, i.e. our Well-being Objectives, which will drive the work of the Council between 2024/25 and 2029/30.

10.2 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act focuses on improving the Social, Economic, Environmental and Cultural Well-being of Wales. The Act makes public bodies, such as the Council, think more about the long-term, work better with people and communities and each other, look to prevent problems and take a more joined-up approach. The proposed new Well-being Objectives and Priorities within the draft Corporate Plan strengthens the integration with Act. This will enable the Council to further embed the requirements of the Act into its arrangements, and to demonstrate how it is meeting its statutory duties.

## **11 CONCLUSION**

- 11.1 Cabinet is recommended to endorse the four Well-being Objectives and to approve the draft Corporate Plan 2024-2030 for consideration at full Council.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

**AS AMENDED BY**

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

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OF THE COUNCIL (COUNCILLOR ANDREW MORGAN)**

**Item:**

**THE COUNCIL'S DRAFT CORPORATE PLAN 2024-2030**

**Background Papers:**

**Draft Corporate Plan 2024-2030  
Draft Report of Engagement Findings  
Feedback from Overview and Scrutiny Committee [29 January 2024](#)**

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