



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

17TH OCTOBER 2019.

PRE SCRUTINY –

MAKING A DIFFERENCE:

THE COUNCIL'S DRAFT CORPORATE PLAN 2020-2024 FOR CONSULTATION

JOINT REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND SERVICE DIRECTOR OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES AND COMMUNICATION IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL (COUNCILLOR ANDREW MORGAN)

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to update Members on the Council's draft corporate plan 2020 – 2024 for consultation following Pre-scrutiny by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on the 23rd September 2019.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:

- 2.1 Note the comments and observations of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee attached as Appendix B of this report.
- 2.2 Subject to any further comment by Cabinet Members, endorse the recommendations outlined within the Council's draft Corporate plan 2020 – 2024 as attached as Appendix A of the report (and for ease of reference as listed below):
- I. Consider and challenge the draft Corporate Plan;
 - II. Note the comments and points raised by Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 23rd September 2019, in pre-scrutinising the draft Corporate Plan;
 - III. Notes the actions set out in the plan that will contribute to the Council's commitment to delivering the Net Zero Carbon targets set out by the Committee on Climate Change;
 - IV. Uses the Corporate Plan as a key aspect of the forthcoming 2020/21 Budget Consultation process with the public of Rhondda Cynon Taf;

- V. Request that the feedback from the consultation processes is presented to Cabinet in March 2020, with the revised Corporate Plan being presented to a meeting of the Council later that month.

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The need for Members to be aware of the comments and observations of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee prior to their consideration of the draft plan for consultation as attached as Appendix A.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The Overview & Scrutiny Committee, in line with its Terms of Reference, has been assigned responsibility to form a view on the new draft Corporate Plan.
- 4.2 In light of this role, Pre-scrutiny on the draft plan was undertaken by the Committee on the 23rd September 2019 prior to Cabinets consideration, and the draft minute is attached as appendix B.

5. PRE-SCRUTINY OF THE STRATEGY

- 5.1 At the meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee Members discussed the draft plan for consultation and provided comments in relation to each of the Council's main priorities and key commitments aligned. An overview of these comments are set out below:

- i. **Council's Vision** – to better reflect the Council's position, as one of the best Council's in Wales the Committee commented that the Council's vision be revised to read "To be the best place in *Wales* to live, work and play, where people and businesses are independent, healthy, and prosperous."

- ii. **Priority: People – Are independent, healthy and successful**
Improving services for children and young people and ensuring the needs of children are considered in everything we do - How we will deliver this:
- The Committee commented on the need to work in partnership with Welsh Government, strive to reduce child poverty, providing services that encourage and build resilience of children and their families.

- iii. **Priority: Places – Where people are proud to live, work and play**

Keeping RCT clean through efficient street cleaning services, minimising the amount of waste we send to landfill, achieving our recycling targets through weekly recycling and regular refuse collections, and reducing our carbon footprint – How we will deliver this:

- Members felt it was important to recognise illegal parking within this area and the consequences this has on residents and the Council - Working with residents and communities to reduce the number of incidents of

littering, dog fouling, fly tipping and illegal parking, using enforcement powers as necessary;

Ensuring the County Borough is one of the safest places in Wales, with high levels of community cohesion and where residents feel safe – How will we deliver this: *Members provided comment on the following actions and commitments to deliver on this aspect:*

- *Supporting the voluntary, community and faith sectors to help build active communities, creating the capacity for meeting the needs of residents within their communities;*
- *Working with the police and other Safer Communities partners to prevent and deter anti-social behaviour and substance misuse in our towns;*
- *Delivering a multi-agency response to all forms of violence and the criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults;*
- *Preventing radicalisation and supporting victims of hate crime, including raising awareness.*

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

Ensuring we have good schools so all children have access to a great education; - How we will deliver this:

- Supporting schools to successfully introduce and embed the new curriculum, raising the standards of educational performance for all pupils;

5.2 The Draft plan has been amended to incorporate the comments of the Committee and is attached as Appendix A.

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment is not needed because the contents of the report are for information purposes only.

7 CONSULTATION

7.1 The report contained within appendix A has been presented to scrutiny for pre scrutiny before consideration by Cabinet. Subject to Cabinet approval this will go forward to public consultation.

8 FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

8.1 Any financial implications are outlined within Appendix A of the report.

9 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

9.1 Non applicable – the report is identifying the scrutiny arrangements that have taken place.

10 LINKS TO THE COUNCILS CORPORATE PLAN / OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES

10.1 Making Best Use of Our Budget – Pre scrutiny can improve cost effectiveness.

11 CONCLUSION

11.1 It is recognised that scrutiny is a vital component of good governance and improves Councils' decision making, service provision and cost effectiveness.

11.2 The undertaking of pre-scrutiny by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee in this area will strength accountability and assist Cabinet Members in taking any future decisions on these matters.



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17th OCTOBER 2019

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

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

AUTHOR: Chris Bradshaw: 01443 424026

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to set out a new draft Corporate Plan from 2020/21 – 2024/25. The draft Plan provides a vision for the County Borough in 2024, and sets out the Council's priorities and objectives it will focus upon over the following four years.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 2.1 Consider and challenge the draft Corporate Plan;
- 2.2 Note the comments and points raised by Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 23rd September 2019, in pre-scrutinising the draft Corporate Plan;
- 2.3 Notes the actions set out in the plan that will contribute to the Council's commitment to delivering the Net Zero Carbon targets set out by the Committee on Climate Change;
- 2.4 Uses the Corporate Plan as a key aspect of the forthcoming 2020/21 Budget Consultation process with the public of Rhondda Cynon Taf;
- 2.5 Request that the feedback from the consultation processes is presented to Cabinet in March 2020, with the revised Corporate Plan being presented to a meeting of the Council later that month.

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

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

- Is well placed to meet future challenges, particularly in the context of cuts to local authority funding, demographic changes in the demand for services and legislation changes;
- Has a clear strategy and set of priorities for future years; and
- Can use this Plan to allocate resources and ensure action plans are in place to deliver the agreed priorities.

4. THE CORPORATE PLAN

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

4.2 The Council's proposed vision is:

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

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

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

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

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

- Despite the new UK Government increasing its spending commitment for public services, for the first time for many years pay

and pensions costs are rising quickly. This negates the majority of the benefit of the increase in public sector funding.

- It is likely that over the next three years further spending cuts will be required, as the UK budget deficit is still stands at around £40 billion or 2% of national GDP meaning that austerity will continue.
- Increasing pressure on services: increasing demand on services is driven by a changing population. Rhondda Cynon Taf's population is increasing but health and social services in particular are facing acute challenges due to the growth in older cohorts, as people live for longer.
- Wider financial pressure on households: from energy bills, housing costs, wage restraint, and benefit reforms.
- Increasing public expectations in terms of responding to climate change and the need to act, will require the Council to invest in ensuring its day to day activities become Carbon Neutral. This means that the Council must plan for the fact that this additional cost will not be met from simply doing more of what it is currently doing, but from making other difficult choices on what it does or does not provide.

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

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

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

5 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

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

6 CONSULTATION

6.1 This draft Corporate Plan has been informed by the extensive budget and other public consultations undertaken over the past few years, and has sought to bring together the outcomes from these consultations to shape the Council's vision, purpose and priorities.

- 6.2 The Overview & Scrutiny Committee pre-scrutinised the first draft of the new Corporate Plan on 23rd September 2019, and as copy of the minutes is included as an appendix to this report. There was a high level of debate amongst the Members which resulted in the draft Corporate Plan being amended to include a number of actions to be included within the priority actions. The amendments suggested by the Scrutiny Committee are underlined in the text of the draft Corporate Plan.
- 6.3 The draft Corporate Plan is presented to Cabinet as a draft so that the Plan along with the 2020/21 budget proposals can be consulted upon together over the coming months with a wide range of stakeholders. Consultation on the budget and feedback received from the community will influence investment areas outlined in the Plan. It is proposed that the Corporate Plan is approved by Council in conjunction with the approval of the 2020/21 budget in March 2020.

7 FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

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

8 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

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

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

- 9.1 This report proposes a new set of corporate priorities and performance targets which will drive the work of the Council between 2020/21 and 2024/25.
- 9.2 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act focuses on improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The Act makes public bodies, such as the Council, think more about the long-term, work better with people and communities and each other, look to prevent problems and take a more joined-up approach. This helps us to create a Wales that we all want to live in, now and in the future. To make sure we are all working towards the same vision, the Act puts in place the following seven well-being goals:
1. **A prosperous Wales** - An innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and

therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.

2. **A resilient Wales** - A nation which maintains and enhances a bio-diverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change).
3. **A healthier Wales** - A society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.
4. **A more equal Wales** - A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio economic background and circumstances).
5. **A Wales of cohesive communities** - Attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities.
6. **A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language** - A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.
7. **A globally responsible Wales** - A nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being.

- 9.3 This draft Corporate Plan's vision, priorities and principles support the seven Well-being Goals. The Act requires the Council to set well-being objectives that maximise its contribution to achieving the well-being goals. In doing so, the Council will be expected to take all reasonable steps to meet those well-being objectives. It is proposed that the Well-being objectives will be the three priorities set out in the draft Corporate Plan 2020-2024. This will be considered and determined by Council in March 2020.

10 CONCLUSION

- 10.1 The Cabinet are recommended to approve the draft Corporate Plan 2020-20204 for consultation as part of the budget consultation for 2020/21 financial year.

Other Information:-

Relevant Scrutiny Committee:

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Background Papers:

Draft Corporate Plan 2020-2024

Contact Officer

Chris Bradshaw – 01443 424026

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

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17th OCTOBER 2019

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Item:

**MAKING A DIFFERENCE
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FOR CONSULTATION**

Background Papers:

Draft Corporate Plan 2020-2024

Officer to contact: Chris Bradshaw 01443 424026

Making A Difference

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

A message from the Leader of the Council

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

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

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

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

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

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

consultation exercise as it helps to inform us what areas you want to see the Council prioritise for the forthcoming year.

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

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

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

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

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

Our ambition is for everyone to be as healthy, independent and prosperous as possible throughout their lives. Enabling access to a good education, developing skills and decent employment opportunities are all key priority areas. As we embrace the changes ahead, we remain absolutely committed to ensuring the effective safeguarding of our vulnerable children and adults. This commitment will not change. We will continue to seek to reduce the number of children looked after through early intervention and prevention and look for innovative ways to support our older population. We will seek to deliver this ambition alongside our commitment to the Council being "A net-zero Green House Gas Council by 2050" to meet the recommendation of the UK Committee on Climate Change.

In the context of reducing budgets and growing demand pressures, the traditional role of the local authority as service deliverer is changing. Working with partners such as the police and health service is essential in tackling the complex and multi-faceted challenges facing our communities and core services. We will also see a different relationship with communities continuing to emerge – one where we work together and both residents and businesses take a shared responsibility for themselves and the communities they live and work in. We are lucky to have strong business, voluntary, community and religious groups across RCT, and they will continue to play an important role in developing this new dynamic throughout the County Borough.

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

Councillor Andrew Morgan
Leader of the Council

What we want to achieve

The Council's vision is:

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

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

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

The Council is committed to delivering three main priorities:

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

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

The Council's three priorities – and our commitments:

People – Are independent, healthy and successful.

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

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

- Being a good corporate parent to children in care and care leavers, and supporting them in securing the most suitable housing, employment, education or training provision;
- Working in partnership with Welsh Government, strive to reduce child poverty, providing services that encourage and build resilience of children and their families.

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

- **Keeping RCT clean through efficient street cleaning services, minimising the amount of waste we send to landfill, achieving our recycling targets through weekly recycling and regular refuse collections, and reducing our carbon footprint – How we will deliver this:**

- Supporting residents to reduce waste and increase recycling to 70% by working with residents and businesses on initiatives that promote waste minimisation and re-use materials;
- Investing in technology to increase the amount of waste we recycle and reuse locally;
- Working with residents, landlords and agents to improve recycling rates across all dwellings;
- Working with residents and communities to reduce the number of incidents of littering, dog fouling, fly tipping and illegal parking, using enforcement powers as necessary;
- Procuring a vehicle fleet that is fit for purpose yet has a limited impact on the environment;
- Creating a circular approach to recycling and reusing waste material such as plastic at every opportunity. This will include developing the Eco Park at Bryn Pica;
- Eliminating single use plastics and such as coffee cups across schools and other council facilities.

- **Keeping the County Borough moving, including improvements to roads and pavements and public transport, whilst also improving air quality – How we will deliver this:**

- Continuing to improve the condition of our roads and pavements and investing in our bridges, retaining walls and flood drainage systems;
- Encouraging the use of public transport through the development of the South Wales Metro, walking and cycling through an investment in active travel initiatives;
- Working with Welsh Government and the Regional Transport Authority to continue to improve access to public transport and explore opportunities to bringing back disused public transport, such as rail lines, for bus routes and active travel;

- Exploring opportunities to develop a cycle network to major destinations in the County Borough without impeding main traffic routes;
 - Promoting and investing in the roll out of electric vehicle charging opportunities;
 - Using enforcement to increase compliance and support traffic to move smoothly and safely.
- **Ensuring the County Borough is one of the safest places in Wales, with high levels of community cohesion and where residents feel safe – How will we deliver this:**
 - Supporting the voluntary, community and faith sectors to help build active communities, creating the capacity for meeting the needs of residents within their communities;
 - Working with the police and Community Safety Partnership to prevent and deter anti-social behaviour and substance misuse in our towns;
 - Delivering a multi-agency response to all forms of violence and the criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults;
 - Preventing radicalisation and supporting victims of hate crime, including raising awareness.
- **Getting the best out of our parks by looking after and investing in our greenspaces – How we will deliver this:**
 - **Investing in the parks infrastructure, including playgrounds, pavements, seating areas and horticultural facilities, and developing masterplans for our major parks that will deliver significant improvements;**
 - Delivering natural carbon storage solutions such as those provided by trees, peat bogs, marshy grassland and other natural habitats across the County Borough to enhance air quality and reduce the impact of greenhouse gasses;
 - Offering community grants for creating greener space, encouraging community groups to invest in small and medium scale greening projects in urban locations across the County Borough;
 - Exploring opportunities to create and use our own green sustainable energy such as micro hydro-electric schemes which utilise natural river and water course features;
 - Bringing cultural and sports events to our parks, such as the National Eisteddfod for Wales in 2022, and Glamorgan County Cricket to Ynysangharad Park to play T20 competitions, investing in the parks infrastructure to hold such significant events.

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

- **Investing in our town centres, bringing jobs and homes into our town centres to create vibrant, thriving places people wish to live, work and socialise; - How we will deliver this:**

- Supporting new businesses to open up in town centres and existing businesses to expand their offer through a wide package of financial support and interventions;
- Where the private sector is unable to tackle empty or rundown sites and premises in town centres, the Council will proactively acquire specific key strategic sites and, in partnership with Welsh Government, seek to develop suitable town centre solutions;
- Developing a tourism offer that encourages people to come to the County Borough and includes attractions such as the Rhondda and Abernant Tunnels, the Zip World Experience, Royal Mint Experience, The National Lido for Wales and the Welsh Mining Experience at the Rhondda Heritage Park. We will support businesses to develop a range of complementary services including offering accommodation in our town centres, such as boutique hotels, quality bed and breakfast and AirBNB locations;
- Continuing to keep town car park charges to a minimum and make it easier for shoppers to visit town centres using public transport or active travel.
- Supporting small and medium sized businesses to recruit the best local talent available into a range of roles from apprenticeships and graduates to leadership positions.

- **Delivering major regeneration and transportation schemes, maximising the impact of the new South Wales Metro, to create better places to live and work, whilst protecting and enhancing the County Borough; - How we will deliver this:**

- The new Local Development Plan will consider a radically different approach to mobility – to create a socially just, zero-carbon mobility plan. This shifts mobility away from the car by eliminating the conditions that make cars necessary. For example, by 2030, we need to ensure that half of all journeys will need to be taken by bus, bike or walking. All remaining journeys will be via electric vehicles.
- Develop town Centre strategies for our principal town centres, which values the uniqueness of each town, whilst building on the benefits of the Metro and including new office accommodation to increase town centre employment, and homes above shops to create footfall in the towns;

- The delivery of major road schemes such as the dualling of the A4119, the Cross Valley Link, the Llanharan By-Pass and the A465 Cynon Valley link road;
 - An investment in a number of Park and Ride facilities across the County Borough at key strategic Metro sites, including JN34 of the M4;
 - Ensuring all homes and businesses have at least access to superfast connectivity, with all key industrial and commercial hubs having access to ultrafast connectivity;
 - The Council will lead on the master planning of the new settlement at Llanillid and the connectivity with the M4 and existing rail connections;
 - Supporting housing developers to bring forward major housing developments on former brownfield sites, such as former Cwm Coking Works in Beddau and the former Phurnacite Works in Aberaman.
- **Ensuring we have good schools so all children have access to a great education; - How we will deliver this:**
 - Improving pupils' achievement and narrowing the attainment gap;
 - Improving outcomes for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities;
 - Supporting children to have the best start in life and be ready for learning through an improved early years' system and childcare offer;
 - Investing in new and replacement 21st Century Schools, whilst also meeting the demand for Welsh language provision throughout the County Borough;
 - Supporting schools to successfully introduce and embed the new curriculum, raising the standards of educational performance for all pupils;
 - Supporting pupils to understand the world of work and access good careers advice and guidance.
- **Increase the number of quality homes available and affordable to provide greater housing choice for residents; - How we will deliver this:**
 - Increase the land supply for new sustainable, low carbon homes through an updated Local Development Plan or Strategic Development Plan from 2021;
 - Ensure that new housing and commercial developments include solar, where feasible, and have the capability to generate, store and use renewable energy onsite;

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

Our Approach

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

- **Live within our means:**
 - Delivering services that matter most by making decisions to prioritise our limited resources;
 - Providing value for money for the taxpayer and ensuring we are transparent in how we operate, maintaining low Council tax increases compared to other Welsh councils;
 - Taking every opportunity to reduce the Council’s running costs;

- Take the steps to further reduce the Council's carbon footprint to "Net Zero" through a sustainable approach to the procurement of energy, supplies and services;
- Ensuring Council vehicles, commissioned home to school transport vehicles, bus operators and taxi vehicles are fit for purpose and are as environmentally friendly as possible.
- **Efficient and effective Council:**
 - Managing our finances and contracts robustly;
 - Providing residents and businesses with the assistance they need at the first point of contact and greater access to online services and support;
 - Treating residents equally, with understanding and respect, with all having access to quality services, whether they wish to engage with the Council in English or Welsh.
- **Maximising opportunities:**
 - Taking a commercial approach to generating income, and looking for new opportunities to generate revenue from our assets. This includes generating green energy for use in local buildings and homes;
 - Making use of digital and evolving technology and innovation to help us achieve better outcomes and become more efficient;
 - Capitalising on opportunities from Welsh Government, City Deal, or private sector investment growth and development to boost the local economy, creating local jobs through major initiatives, such as the Metro;
- **Shared responsibility:**
 - Working with residents and the community to share responsibility, helping communities to do more for themselves and give them more control over what they can do to support local people in their communities;
 - Focusing on prevention and early help in local communities so residents can live independently for as long as possible;
 - Working in partnership with other public sector providers to maximise the impact of our resources on improving public services.

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

The Act focuses on improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing of Wales. It makes public bodies, such as the Council, think more about the long term, work better with people and communities and each other, look to prevent problems and take a more joined up approach. This will help us to create a Wales that we all want to live in, now and in the future. To make

sure we are all working towards the same vision, the Act puts in place seven national Well-being Goals:

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

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

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

Appendix A

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

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

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

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

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

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on Monday, 23 September 2019 at 5.00 pm at the Council Chamber, The Pavilions, Cambrian Park. Clydach Vale, Tonypany, CF40 2XX.

County Borough Councillors - Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members in attendance:-

Councillor M Adams (Chair)

Councillor S Evans	Councillor P Jarman
Councillor H Boggis	Councillor D Macey
Councillor L Walker	Councillor G Caple
Councillor S Morgans	Councillor W Jones

Officers in attendance

Mr C Bradshaw, Chief Executive
Mr C Hanagan, Service Director Democratic Services & Communications
Mr G Isingrini, Group Director Community & Children's Services
Mr N Wheeler, Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services

Other Members in Attendance

Councillor G Thomas

Co-opted Member in Attendance

Mr J Fish, Voting Elected Parent / Governor Representative

16 Declaration of Interest

In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, there were no declarations made pertaining to the agenda.

17 Apologies

The following apologies for absence were received from County Borough Councillors J Bonetto, J Brencher, M Griffiths, J Harries and E Stephens.

18 Draft Corporate Plan 2020-2024

The Chair welcomed everyone to the Special Overview & Scrutiny Committee which had been convened to provide Members with the opportunity to undertake pre scrutiny of the Council's draft Corporate Plan 2020-2024 and to inform a recommended way forward and feedback to the Cabinet.

The Chief Executive reminded Scrutiny that in February 2016 the Council approved its Corporate Plan for 2016-2020 following a period of consultation in respect of the vision, purpose and the then three priorities, Economy, People and Place. The Corporate Plan had succeeded to shape the way in which the

Council works and has progressed such matters as the reduction of Council office accommodation and significant investment with which to deliver public services.

With regard to the Council's draft Corporate Plan 2020-2024, members of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee were asked to consider whether it set out a clear vision and purpose for the Council and whether the priorities, People, Places and Prosperity were appropriate. Members were reminded that the priority 'Prosperity' had replaced the former priority 'Economy' to better reflect issues relating to our town centres and the way residents conduct their work and business and how they socialise.

A Member referred to the Council's vision and suggested the following: "To be the best place in **Wales** to live, work and play..." not just South Wales to better reflect that this Council is the best in Wales.

Another Member referred to the vision for our communities within the plan and referenced the National Survey for Wales 2016/17 data which placed RCT in 19th position out of 22 Local Authorities, below the National average as residents feel they have little sense of community involvement. In response, the Chief Executive agreed that conducting the Council's own public survey would be a way of producing a true reflection of public perception in respect of Council services, community engagement and the fear of crime as some sample surveys can be low and provide a misleading picture.

The Service Director Democratic Services & Communications stated that a report to the next Finance & Performance Scrutiny Committee sets out the Council's approach to resident engagement and consultation particularly with regards to service changes, budget consultation and corporate plan engagement.

The co-opted member present reminded committee of the importance of engagement with young people and although the Corporate Plan was aspirational and sound he felt it lacked appeal to young people. At this stage, it was confirmed that Members input alone was being sought but consultation with the wider community would involve a range of methods including online, accessible roadshow events and specific engagement for young and older people.

A Member suggested that a key theme and concern for young people is climate change and inclusion of this topic may attract their interest. It was pointed out that under the priority, Prosperity, a number of actions are already in place to address this issue.

People: are independent, healthy and successful

The Chief Executive explained that each priority includes a number of objectives and a number of actions under each objective. Scrutiny was asked to form a view on whether they considered the objectives to be relevant and appropriate and he invited Scrutiny to suggest others areas for inclusion as necessary.

Members discussed the issue of child poverty and the numbers defined as living in poverty as a concern and a topic that should be referenced in the Corporate Plan. They acknowledged that it did not necessarily relate to financial poverty but to poor education and social deprivation. The Chief Executive heralded

education as key to enabling families move out of poverty. Despite concerns raised that through the centralisation of services, contact with families at a local level is lost, the Group Director, Community & Children's Services pointed out that there is a wide range of available services which are now more effective such as the 'Resilient Families' initiative which identifies those families and extended families in need.

It was agreed that the promotion of safeguarding issues would be targeted more widely through a number of sources such as the Council website.

A query was raised in respect of the increasing opportunities for partnership working and whether the local authority has the balance right, is there currently an over reliance partners? Members were reminded that recently the local authority held the Cwm Taf Health Board to account with a request for further actions to be reported back to Full Council, demonstrating its leadership role.

Another reference was made to the earlier survey which stated that 52.9% of RCT residents consider that Adult Social Services are delivering an effective service, which questions are surveys truly reflecting public perception and are services delivering? The Group Director, Community & Children's Services confirmed that the Director of Social Services report evidenced RCT to be nearer the top quartile in many areas. He assured Scrutiny that the Council's vision is for every child in the County Borough to be all they can be and for the local authority to aspire for all. The Chief Executive added that as evidenced in the Director of Social Services report and the Customer Feedback Scheme – Comments, Compliments and Complaints annual report, fewer complaints are being referred to the Public Service Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW) and those that were referred were resolved successfully by the relevant service area.

Places- where people are proud to live, work and play

Members commented that RCT is far ahead of other local authorities in respect of grass cutting and maintenance of its green spaces and its street cleansing services. The Group Director Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services reported on a number of areas under the priority 'Places' that are performing well such as a reduction in the number of insurance claims due to the continuing work to improve the condition of the roads throughout the County Borough. He added that through a number of initiatives the Council is looking to achieve its 70% recycling target set by Welsh Government. The levels of dog fouling and fly tipping have reduced due to enforcement powers. Members highlighted illegal parking as an area for inclusion in the Council's Corporate Plan using the Council's mobile camera parking enforcement vehicle to capture clearly defined images of vehicles parking unlawfully outside our schools, in bus stops and on pedestrian crossings.

Members praised the recycling process in RCT which was considered a 'first class service' particularly the nappy recycling service which now has over 11,000 participating residents but Members encouraged further promotion of the schemes that are working well.

It was agreed that a section on community safety should be included in the Corporate Plan which would demonstrate how the Council is ensuring that RCT is one of safest places in Wales to live and how the Council intends to deliver this.

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

Scrutiny Committee agreed that key to the prosperity of the residents of RCT is providing good quality homes and helping people into work. As a major employer, Members asked how the Council is planning to deliver better paid employment. It was confirmed that the Council is already supporting working parents back into employment and is delivering excellent graduate and apprenticeship schemes. Businesses are being encouraged to open in town centres such as the Taff Vale development in Pontypridd which will increase footfall to the area and local spend. In keeping with the promotion of town centres, it was reported that the staff from Bronwydd House would be accommodated in Porth town centre so as to help the town to thrive whilst the building would be transformed into an Extra Care provision for the County Borough's residents that need extra support.

Members were informed that through the City Deal local companies (the example of companies producing medical aids/devices was given) are now inter connecting and trading with each other, building up a local network.

A Member suggested that the Corporate Plan acknowledges how the Council intends on supporting those who are delivering educational outcomes for our pupils and raising performance.

Members agreed that promotion of our tourist destinations and green spaces needs to be improved via wider distribution of the RCT tourist brochure and better signage to our parks. The Chair also stated that we should have local people employed at our key Heritage sites.

In conclusion, the Scrutiny Committee was asked to give further consideration to the approach in delivering the priorities and specific issues such as climate change and whether the seven national Wellbeing goals within the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 have been given the appropriate focus.

Concern was raised in respect of the reduction of peat bogs to accommodate the wind turbines and the fear that RCT is a wind rich area for future development. The Member asked whether it was for RCT to defy the Planning Inspectorate Wales in certain cases so as to protect its existing natural habitats and readdress the balance. It was suggested that the influence of the 10 local authorities of the City Deal may be the best way forward in tackling this issue.

In response to a query in relation to the Phurnacite Works in Aberaman, it was suggested that discussions with Welsh Government/Developers would take place over the next few years to encourage major housing developments on the site.

Following extensive discussions it was **RESOLVED** to endorse a final draft, to incorporate the comments and points raised by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, for inclusion in the Council's Corporate Plan 2020-2024, for future consideration by Cabinet, prior to wide-ranging public, staff and stakeholder engagement.

This meeting closed at 6.30pm

**Cllr M Adams
Chairman**