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**RHONDDA CYNON TAF**  
TRISTADALTH GADARN | DYFODOL SICR

## RECORD OF DELEGATED OFFICER DECISION

Key Decision

✓

### **SUBJECT:**

Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan Annual Monitoring Report 2016.

### **PURPOSE OF REPORT:**

In accordance with the Council's Scheme of Delegation, this report has been prepared to accompany the intended officer decision of the Director of Regeneration and Planning as described below.

The purpose of the report is to outline the contents of the Local Development Plan Annual Monitoring Report 2016 (LDP; AMR), prior to its submission to the Welsh Government.

### **DELEGATED DECISION (18th October 2016):**

It is agreed that:

The Local Development Plan Annual Monitoring Report be submitted to the Welsh Government.

  
Chief Officer Signature

JANE COOK  
Print Name

20/10/16  
Date

The decision is taken in accordance with Section 15 of the Local Government Act, 2000 (Executive Functions) and in the terms set out in Section 5 of Part 3 of the Council's Constitution

**CONSULTATION**

Bew.

20/10/16

**CONSULTEE CABINET MEMBER SIGNATURE**

**DATE**

**CONSULTEE OFFICER SIGNATURE**

**DATE**

**CALL IN PROCEDURE RULES.**

**IS THE DECISION DEEMED URGENT AND NOT SUBJECT TO CALL-IN BY THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE:**

NO ✓

*If deemed urgent* - signature of Mayor or Deputy Mayor or Head of Paid Service confirming agreement that the proposed decision is reasonable in all the circumstances for it being treated as a matter of urgency, in accordance with the overview and scrutiny procedure rule 17.2:

.....  
(Mayor)

.....  
(Dated)

**NB - If this is a reconsidered decision then the decision Cannot be Called In and the decision will take effect from the date the decision is signed.**

**Further Information**

<b>Directorate:</b>	<b>Regeneration and Planning</b>
<b>Contact Name:</b>	<b>Simon Gale</b>
<b>Designation:</b>	<b>Service Director, Planning</b>
<b>Tel. No.</b>	<b>01443 494716</b>

**FOR CABINET OFFICE USE ONLY**

**PUBLICATION & IMPLEMENTATION DATES**

**PUBLICATION**

Publication on the Councils Website:- 20/10/16

**DATE**

**IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION**

**Note:** This decision will not come into force and may not be implemented until the expiry of 5 clear working days after its publication to enable it to be the subject to the Call-In Procedure in Rule 17.1 of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules.

Subject to Call In the implementation date will be \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE**

  
**Secretary to the Cabinet Signature**

CHRISTIAN S. HANGANU  
**Print Name**

20/10/16  
**Date**



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

### **A REPORT TO ACCOMPANY A DECISION OF THE DIRECTOR OF REGENERATION AND PLANNING**

**18TH OCTOBER 2016**

### **RHONDDA CYNON TAF LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2016**

**AUTHOR: SIMON GALE**

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

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to outline the contents of the Local Development Plan Annual Monitoring Report (LDP; AMR) for the period 2015-2016 prior to the submission of the document to the Welsh Government.

#### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that:

- 2.1 The contents of the LDP; AMR are agreed prior to the Director of Regeneration and Planning submitting the document to the Welsh Government.

#### **3. REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 It is considered that the content of the report is a true and accurate record of the monitoring of the LDP.

#### **4. BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 The Rhondda Cynon Taf LDP was adopted on 2 March 2011. As part of the statutory development plan process the Council is required to prepare an AMR. This is the fifth AMR prepared by the Council and provides monitoring of the effectiveness of the LDP core strategy and policies, the plan's sustainability performance and identifies any significant contextual changes that might influence its delivery. The AMR has to be submitted to the Welsh Government by 31st October each year.

#### **5. KEY FINDINGS OF THE ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT**



- 5.1 The LDP sets out an ambitious program for sustainable economic growth and regeneration in Rhondda Cynon Taf. The approach taken in the Plan looks even more ambitious when set against the backdrop of global economic recession. Inevitably the results of the monitoring exercise indicate certain areas have fared better than others.
- 5.2 Since the adoption of the LDP in 2011, it is considered that the following elements of the Plan are making good progress in delivering the targets set out in the LDP. These include:

### **Strategic Sites**

During 2015-16, approval was given for a comprehensive 'hybrid' proposal (full and outline permission) for the Llanilld Strategic Site. This comprises of up to 1,850 dwellings and a neighbourhood centre, (including community & leisure facilities, primary school, retail and commercial floorspace). A section of the site had previous consent for 240 dwellings and is being developed, with 160 completed so far.

A new college campus for the Cynon Valley received approval in July 2015 on the lower part of the Robertstown Strategic Site, and is already well under construction. This will provide significant numbers of new jobs for those working in the college whilst also contributing to the training and developing of skills of the local population. Planning permission was also granted for a supermarket on the Robertstown Strategic Site during 2015-16. Pre-application discussions with the new owners and potential developers of the wider Abernant residential elements of the Strategic Site are at an advanced stage, with the hospital buildings demolished and cleared.

In Hirwaun there has been an approval of an outline application for 2,000m<sup>2</sup> retail development within the local centre element of the site. It is anticipated that the determination of this application will provide more certainty on the ability of other parts of the Strategic Site to come forward. Indeed, further detailed pre-application discussions have taken place with regards to the residential and employment elements of the site. The Cardiff Capital Region 'City Deal' provides further investment opportunities for the Heads of Valleys area, including transport schemes such as the electrification of the rail line as part of the South East Wales Metro and the extension of the passenger rail service to Hirwaun.

There has previously been an approval for the construction of wind turbines on Maerdy Colliery. Section 106 planning obligations attached to the development will provide a significant contribution to the leisure elements of the strategic site.



Last year's AMR also noted the approval of an outline application on the Cwm Coking Works site for the demolition of the existing structures, (retention of listed towers), site remediation, land restoration and development to provide a mix of uses including 851 residential units (use class C3), a primary school and open space.

Similarly, the Mwyndy/ Talbot Green Strategic Site benefits from full approval for a superstore along with the infrastructure for the wider new town centre. This wider town centre has outline consent and comprises A1 retail space, A2 financial and professional service space, A3 food and drink space, B1 office space, a cinema, hotel, car parking and related infrastructure.

There have been pre-application discussions on the former Phumacite plant with the landowner of the site wanting to bring the site forward for development. It is understood that an agreement is close with Welsh Government in relation to accessing the site.

### **Retail Development**

There have been approvals for supermarkets in the Northern Strategy Area during 2015-16. These were on the local centre of the Strategic Site at Hirwaun and on the Robertstown Strategic Site, with an earlier approval within the existing village of Hirwaun on the former Ferrari's site. In the Principal Town of Pontypridd a new Lidl store was constructed and began trading, whilst a significant extension to an existing unit in the Town centre has resulted in a large Poundland store opening in 2016.

Construction has commenced on the 10,976 sqm gross floorspace superstore on the Mwyndy-Talbot Green Strategic Site (along with the wider infrastructure), which was permitted during 2014-15 monitoring period. The wider Town Centre was approved for approximately 34,000 sqm of retail and further significant leisure, office and hotel floor space. The permission at the Llanilid Strategic Site will also see the creation of the local centre there, with some retail element. Development has also come forward on the Bryncae Industrial Estate neighbourhood retail scheme.

Since the adoption of the LDP, a further 7,717 sqm of new retail floor space has been built at Pontypridd Retail Park. It is recognised there has been considerable development interest within the retail sector in the County Borough including permission granted for a new local centre on the former Bryncae industrial estate.

- 5.3 The AMR also shows that other elements of the plan are not fully meeting their specific targets, although it is evidenced that other market



factors or methods of intervention are allowing for considerable positive activity in these sectors.

### **House Building**

During 2015/16, a total of 569 new dwellings were constructed in Rhondda Cynon Taf. This takes the total number of new dwellings constructed in the County Borough since 2006, (the technical start of the plan period), to 4,645. Applications for a further 2,264 dwellings were permitted through this past year, contributing to a total of 6,956 dwellings permitted since the adoption of the LDP in 2011.

Although these substantial figures indicate a continued positive growth in the house building industry in Rhondda Cynon Taf since the adoption of the LDP, the building rates do not meet those identified in the LDP. As indicated in our Joint Housing Land Availability Study (2015) we have a reduced housing land supply of just 1.5 years based on the residual method of calculation.

Considering recent and longer standing permissions, the housing targets are not an issue of immediate concern. It is however acknowledged in the LDP AMR that housing allocations, particularly in the Northern Strategy Area are not quite coming forward at the rate they were anticipated. The Council has been proactive in seeking methods of intervention to boost the delivery of housing in RCT through the unique housing Developer Forum and the Strategy for Enabling Housing Development introduced in 2015.

### **Affordable Housing**

During 2015 - 16, 98 new affordable homes were built in Rhondda Cynon Taf. This brings the total number of affordable homes built since 2006 to 701 dwellings. A total of 326 affordable units were approved during this 2015-16 period. Although there has been this regular provision of affordable units, the building rates do not meet the identified need in the LDP. This again can be linked to the economic climate and the delivery of general market housing developments over the past few years. For the reasons mentioned in relation to market housing, above, the affordable housing targets are not an issue of immediate concern.

### **Employment Led Development**

The LDP allocates 98 hectares of land for employment purposes.

The 4.17ha allocation at Hirwaun Industrial Estate (NSA 14.2) has begun to implement its consent for a sustainable waste resource



recovery and energy production plant at Fifth and Ninth Avenues.

The mixed-use application at allocation NSA 14.1 in Ferndale has received outline permission for a comprehensive mixed-use redevelopment of the former Chubb Factory site, comprising up to 172 residential dwellings and up to 20,750 sq ft of mixed-use commercial, retail and employment floor-space .

The Council granted a sizeable permission in August 2015 for industrial development. The application for 9,272m<sup>2</sup> (gross) of industrial mixed development comprises three business units to be located at Parc Elrin, Tonyrefail, near the 'Ensinger' site. A further 3 hectares of the former Hepworth Business Park employment site at Talbot Green has also been given permission for redevelopment, for considerable mixed-use commercial units.

Permission was also granted for a car sales/ showroom on the Gateway site in Abercynon, with the regional company 'Trade Centre Wales' now operating from the long term vacant site. Over 80 jobs are to be created, with the majority of these being resident of RCT. The former Sogefi site in Llantrisant has also received planning permission which forms the first phase of complete redevelopment of the site as Edwards Coaches Headquarters.

As with the housing sector, the global economic recession has had an effect on commercial and industrial development and accordingly it is understood why significant allocated employment sites have not come forward. However, there have been many examples of considerable investment in the sector during the plan period, in addition to those mentioned above.

It should also be noted that there is continued development and redevelopment of our existing 102 employment sites, which contain approximately 1,667 units. The monitoring of these sites indicated that there was a vacancy rate of just 14.7% during 2015-16.

Nevertheless, the Council will seek to review its options to improve the delivery of its employment sites and achieve its target in terms of the implementation of the LDP

Furthermore, as the economy recovers, opportunities to secure meaningful employment related inward investment in Rhondda Cynon Taf will hopefully increase. The City Deal and the major investment associated with it will hopefully see greater commercial development across Rhondda Cynon Taf. However, it is not considered that a review of the employment allocations at this stage would necessarily have any direct impact on the delivery of economic development in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

## 5.4 Sustainability Appraisal Monitoring

The findings of the Sustainability Appraisal monitoring element of the LDP, indicates that overall, the plan is travelling in a positive direction for almost all of the aspects of sustainability; these being the indicators for Employment, Health, Transport, Built Environment, Landscape, Water, Climate Change, Energy, Land/Soils, Air Quality, Culture and Heritage and Waste. Indicators for Communities are seeing some elements being met whilst others are not currently being achieved. The delivery of Housing is not wholly being met in line with the specific requirements of the Indicator, although as mentioned throughout this report, significant housing is being delivered.

## 6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) screening form has been prepared for the purpose of this report. It has been found that a full report is not required at this time.

## 7. CONSULTATION

**7.1 Relevant service areas within the Council have been consulted.**

**8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)**

**8.1 There are no financial implications aligned to this report.**

**9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED**

**9.1 The annual monitoring of the LDP is part of the wider statutory LDP process.**

**10. LINKS TO THE COUNCILS CORPORATE PLAN/OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES/SIP**

10. The success and implementation of the LDP is key in delivering the objectives of the Council's Corporate Plan. These include in particular the creating of neighbourhoods where people are proud to live and work and also to build a strong economy. The LDP was prepared in advance of The Wellbeing of Future Generations Act, although the wider sustainability principles on which it was prepared, align well with the specific sustainable principles of the Act.

## 11. CONCLUSION

**11.1 Whilst the pattern of growth in some areas is slower than anticipated at the time of writing the LDP, evidence collected through the monitoring**



process suggests that good progress is being made in the delivery of the majority of LDP targets. It is anticipated that the development that has taken place in Rhondda Cynon Taf since the adoption of the LDP, coupled with the projected future investment from the public and private sector will ensure that the LDP core strategy is successfully delivered.



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**LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

**AS AMENDED BY**

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

**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

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REGENERATION AND PLANNING**

**18 OCTOBER 2016**

**Item:**

**Background Papers**

**Annual Monitoring Report 2015-2016**

**Officer to contact: Simon Gale**