



RHONDDA CYNON TAF

RECORD OF DELEGATED OFFICER DECISION

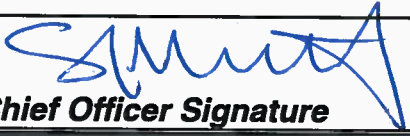
SUBJECT: Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan Annual Monitoring Report 2014.

PURPOSE OF ATTACHED REPORT:

The purpose of the report is to outline the contents of the Local Development Plan Annual Monitoring Report 2014 (LDP; AMR), prior to its submission to the Welsh Government.

DELEGATED DECISION (Date):

That the LDP; AMR is agreed prior to the Service Director Planning submitting the document to the Welsh Government.

 Chief Officer Signature	STEVE MARRITT Print Name	23/10/14 Date
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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

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CONSULTEE CABINET MEMBER SIGNATURE

23/10/14

DATE

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OFFICER CONSULTEE SIGNATURE

23/10/14

DATE

Directorate:	Regeneration and Planning
Contact Name:	Simon Gale
Designation:	Service Director Planning
Tel.No.	01443 494716

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2014 - 2015 REPORT TO ACCOMPANY DECISION OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Part 1

(Non Confidential)

**RHONDDA CYNON TAF
LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN
ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2014**

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 2013 -2014 prior to the submission of the document to the Welsh Government

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that:

(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. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 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 third 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 31 October each year.

4. KEY FINDINGS OF THE ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT

- 4.1 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.
- 4.2 The following elements of the Plan are considered to be making good progress and are delivering the targets set out in the LDP. These include:
- **Retail Development** – Since the adoption of the LDP, 7,717 sqm of new retail floor space has been built at Pontypridd Retail Park. Full permission has been

given during 2013/14 for a 10,976 sqm gross floorspace superstore on the Mwyndy-Talbot Green Strategic Site. This is within the wider Town Centre proposals for 33,400 sqm of retail and leisure floor space, which had a resolution for outline approval during 2012-13. There have also been resolutions to approve 3 further outline applications for supermarkets in Hirwaun and Aberdare during 2013-14.

- **Strategic Sites** – To date, planning applications have been submitted and various levels of permissions granted for development on 5 of the 8 Strategic Sites allocated in the LDP. These include a resolution to approve 2,093 dwellings and a neighbourhood centre at the former OCC Site at Llanilid, of which 243 have full permission with their development progressing well. There is a resolution to approve an outline application for 851 dwellings and a new primary school at the Former Cwm Coking Works and Colliery Site at Ty-Nant; Also included are the above mentioned retail approvals on the Strategic Site at Mwyndy / Talbot Green and the retail led schemes on the Strategic Sites at Land South of Hirwaun and Robertstown, Aberdare. In addition, pre application discussions have taken place in respect of the wider Roberstown / Abernant, Phurnacite and Fernhill Colliery Strategic Sites.
- **Waste** – During 2013/14, a further 3.2 hectares of waste management capacity was approved in Rhondda Cynon Taf. Accordingly, since the adoption of the LDP, a total of 9.2 hectares of waste management capacity has been approved. This equates to 73% of the minimum threshold of capacity provision required by the South East Wales Regional Waste Plan or 42.4% of the maximum threshold (for the LDP plan period).

4.3 The AMR shows that the following elements of the plan are not fully meeting their targets, although it is considered that the situation can be improved without immediate intervention. These relate principally to:

- **House Building** – During 2013/14, a total of 534 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 3,523. Applications for a further 969 dwellings were permitted through this past year. Although these figures indicate a continued positive growth in the house building industry in Rhondda Cynon Taf (when comparing with the previous 2 years AMRs), the building rates do not meet those identified in the LDP. There remains an issue whereby certain housing sites are not seen to be financially viable for them to come forward. These issues may be associated with the state of the global economic climate in recent years. As indicated in our Joint Housing Land Availability Study (2013) we have a reduced housing land supply of just 3.7 years based on the residual method of calculation. However, if the method of calculation that looks at actual build rates over the past 10 years is considered, then there would be over 11 years housing land supply. Considering recent permissions and the scale of proposals that have been approved subject to Section 106 agreements, the housing targets are not an issue of immediate concern. It is however acknowledged in the LDP AMR that housing allocations in the Northern Strategy Area are not quite coming forward at the rate they were anticipated.

- **Affordable Housing** - During 2013/14, 59 new affordable homes were built in Rhondda Cynon Taf. This brings the total number of affordable homes built since 2006 to 489 dwellings. 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. The affordable housing targets are not an issue of immediate concern.
- **Employment Led Development** – The LDP allocates 98 hectares of land for employment purposes. None of this allocated employment land has yet been developed, with permission granted on 4.17 hectares. As with the housing sector, the global economic recession has had an effect on commercial and industrial development. However, it should be noted that there is continued development and redevelopment of our existing 103 employment sites. The monitoring of these sites indicated that there was a vacancy rate of just 16% of the 1,532 employment units surveyed. Nevertheless, there is still a concern that the sector is not achieving its target in terms of the implementation of the LDP and the Council will review the options available to it during the next monitoring period, to intervene and stimulate growth. Additionally, it is intended that there may be an opportunity through the review of the LDP in 2015 to amend the target and indicators relating to employment, which would give a truer reflection of the commercial and industrial sector in the County Borough. Furthermore, as the economy recovers, opportunities to secure meaningful employment related inward investment in Rhondda Cynon Taf will hopefully increase. 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. CONCLUSION

- 5.1 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. There is no evidence to suggest there is a need for a review of the LDP at this time, considering also that there will be a statutory review of the plan in 2015.

