

## THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL

Minutes of a remote Special Meeting held at 6.35 p.m. on 20<sup>th</sup> November, 2023.

The Council agenda is available [here](#).

The Meeting recording is available [here](#).

Present: Councillor Julie Aviet (Mayor); Councillors Anne Asbrey, Gareth Ball, Rhiannon Birch, Bronwen Brooks, Gillian Bruce, Ian Buckley, Lis Burnett, Samantha Campbell, George Carroll, Charles Champion, Janice Charles, Millie Collins, Marianne Cowpe, Pamela Drake, Vincent Driscoll, Anthony Ernest, Christopher Franks, Wendy Gilligan, Emma Goodjohn, Ewan Goodjohn, Stephen Haines, Sally Hanks, Howard Hamilton, William Hennessy, Nic Hodges, Mark Hooper, Catherine Iannucci, Gwyn John, Dr. Ian Johnson, Susan Lloyd-Selby, Belinda Loveluck-Edwards, Julie Lynch-Wilson, Kevin Mahoney, Michael Morgan, Jayne Norman, Helen Payne, Elliot Penn, Sandra Perkes, Ian Perry, Joanna Protheroe, Ruba Sivagnanam, Carys Stallard, Neil Thomas, Rhys Thomas, Margaret Wilkinson, Edward Williams, Mark Wilson and Nicholas Wood.

### 528 ANNOUNCEMENT –

Prior to the commencement of the business of the Committee, the Mayor read the following statement: “May I remind everyone present that the meeting will be live streamed as well as recorded via the internet and this recording archived for future viewing”.

### 529 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE –

These were received from Councillors Christine Cave, Robert Fisher, Russell Godfrey, Naomi Marshallsea and Steffan Wiliam.

### 530 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST –

Councillor Penn informed the Council that at the meeting of the Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee on 14<sup>th</sup> November, 2023 he had declared an interest but after seeking advice from the Monitoring Officer he was advised that his interest did not equate to a personal or prejudicial interest.

531 VALE OF GLAMORGAN REPLACEMENT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2021-2036 REVISED DELIVERY AGREEMENT AND DRAFT PREFERRED STRATEGY (REF) –

The Cabinet Member for Community Engagement, Equalities and Regulatory Services (Councillor R. Sivagnanam) was seeking the Council's formal approval of two documents. The first was the Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP), Revised Delivery Agreement and its submission to Welsh Government, and the second was the approval of the Replacement Local Delivery Plan Preferred Strategy for public consultation. The Revised Delivery Agreement, set out who would be involved in the plan preparation and the timetable for doing so. The approval of this document for submission to Welsh Government would ensure that a realistic timetable was in place for the next stages of a plan preparation. The second document was the Preferred Strategy, which set out the vision, objectives and strategy for the Replacement Local Development Plan for the 15 year period from 2021 to 2036. It was a requirement for every local authority to have an up-to-date Development Plan. While the legislation may set the timetable, the Plan was driven by the belief that by effectively managing development over the next 15 years, the Council could create a Vale of Glamorgan that delivered improved economic, health and educational outcomes for all its citizens. She thanked the relevant officers for their hard work in preparing the Plan which was unashamedly one for growth. With an aging population it was important to achieve a demographic balance by encouraging people of working age and their families to live and work in the Vale. This would drive economic prosperity and ensure a range of communities and businesses that would make the Vale that the special and sustainable place that it is. She indicated that planning for no growth or low growth was simply not an option. She reminded Members of the current housing crisis and the need for affordable housing in the County. The local housing market assessment indicated a need of 1200 new affordable homes each year. The new sites identified in the Replacement Local Development Plan would offer the opportunity of new affordable housing to be secured through Section 106 agreements and for small scale affordable housing led developments in minor rural settlements of the Vale. This would mean that the Vale would be able to offer affordable homes to help local families stay in the towns and villages they wanted to call home. This in turn would strengthen communities and ensure they remained sustainable for future generations.

The Plan included 5 new key sites that would allow settlements of Barry, Dinas Powys, Rhoose and St Athan to expand in a sustainable way. The Strategy made provision for a level of growth that was based on past build rates over a 10 year period. The new sites identified would provide 2600 of the 7890 new homes which were proposed. The development plans were founded on two key additional elements, consultation and sustainability. During that consultation, work with communities was undertaken to identify sites which could contribute to the key elements of the strategy. The Sustainable Growth Strategy would provide both housing and employment growth, supported by appropriate infrastructure and would accord with the Council's position within the Cardiff Capital Region. More importantly, it was one which would enable the people of the Vale to create a vibrant future in the Vale.

The Cabinet Member indicated that whilst housing was crucial to the vision for growth it was also far more than new homes. It would also provide improved options for active travel, vital to help in the fight against climate change with the Preferred Strategy focusing on development in locations that were well served by existing and proposed new rail stations and in areas with good bus links. The plan also allowed for small scale affordable housing led development in settlements outside the strategic growth area at a scale proportionate to the size of the settlement.

The deposit LDP would provide for 5338 jobs to meet the needs of the population. 67.8 hectares of employment land was allocated for this and would support the role of Cardiff Airport as a strategic gateway for international connectivity and allow large scale regeneration opportunities, including at Aberthaw and Barry Docks. The RLDP also considered the Vale in the wider regional and national context as it was aligned with Future Wales, the national plan for 2040. The County was within a future Wales national growth area alongside Cardiff, Newport and the Valleys.

All Elected Members had had the opportunity to be involved at every stage of developing the Preferred Strategy and to attend a briefing on the Preferred Strategy.

The views expressed that those engagement sessions had been vital in shaping the Preferred Strategy, in particular the focusing of development in areas where, while served by public transport, was something strongly favoured by Members, as was the need for small scale affordable housing. It was not only Elected Members who had contributed, a wide range of other stakeholders had also been involved, including the Public Services Board.

The Cabinet Member, in summing up, emphasised that the Preferred Strategy was only the first stage in the process of adopting a Replacement Local Development Plan.

Councillor Sivagnanam moved that the recommendations as set out in the report be approved. This was seconded by the Leader of the Council.

Councillor Haines questioned the premise of the RLDP which appeared to him not to be a Plan but more of a developers' Charter with developers choosing where they wanted to build houses. He expressed concern at the level of current and planned development in his Ward of St. Athan. He also touched upon the key locations for employment growth within the St. Athan area, Bro Tathan, Cardiff Enterprise zones and the proposed Aberthaw Green Energy Park, as well as existing a future transport connectivity proposals. Referring to the Employment Land Survey for the period 2015 to 2020 and the projected employment growth levels linked to the above initiatives and the lead times for growth of these sites, even with the existing infrastructure, he was aware from stakeholder feedback of the weaknesses with Bro Tathan, which was the lack of services which the Plan was stating were in St. Athan. He acknowledged that this was a measure of jobs capacity this land could support, rather than a forecast of new jobs which could be

generated in the Vale. The figures indicated zero growth. He also referred to the proposed feasibility study linked to the provision of a train station at St. Athan which had yet to receive a response. In summation, he did not believe the Plan as proposed would deliver jobs in the near future or a train station at St. Athan, the latter in his view contravening Policy 12 Regional Connectivity regarding the development of St. Athan and indicated that he would not be supporting the Plan's approval and urged other Members to do the same.

Councillor Mahoney considered that the Council did not have regard to sustainability issues given that housing developments in his Ward at the Bendricks, Barry and in Sully given their locality to flood plains and the fact that they were served with few amenities in terms of shops and public transport. He had no faith in the Administration and he was sceptical of the Plan being put forward.

Councillor Hooper acknowledged the importance of the Plan and the process for delivering it and that Members needed to be able to take a view on it, particularly those matters yet to be determined. He supported the Revised Delivery Agreement and alluded to concerns raised at the recent meeting of the Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee challenging three of the major sites in the Strategy on infrastructure grounds and accepted that these concerns would need to be reconciled during the process. He considered that the Strategy needed to deliver homes and other developments needed for communities to thrive, as opposed to enabling developers to make a quick buck. As a resident of a recent development at the Waterfront in Barry he was all too aware what it was like to be left at the margins by developers whose eyes are on the next big financial prize. Reflecting on those concerns raised at the Scrutiny Committee by the public and fellow Councillors in relation to sites at Barry, Rhoose, Dinas Powys and Llandough he thought, as did fellow Councillors that the Strategy was not sufficiently well rounded to be put before the public for consultation and requested that it be taken back, re-worked and re-presented in the New Year, having given consideration to the key points made by those closest to the proposed developments. He requested a recorded vote on the matter and the relevant number of Members indicated their agreement.

Referring to inappropriate developments the Plan was an opportunity to ensure that did not happen, Councillor Carroll expressed his disappointment that this would not be the case. He highlighted concerns in relation to proposed sites and the lack of appropriate infrastructure in the eastern Vale. He was also frustrated to see the Model Farm site still being taken forward. Rather than waiting for the Welsh Government to determine matters, he considered that it would be far more profitable if everyone accepted that it was unsuitable and moved on. Residents from across the Vale had already approached him with concerns about the way the Council was approaching the RLDP, and it was clear that the proposed approach was not fit for purpose. He felt that it was time to listen to residents and to think again. He indicated that he would be voting against the Plan.

Councillor Franks alluded to the sites in Dinas Powys and to the huge risk of setting a dangerous precedence by eroding land linking Barry, Dinas Powys and Llandough. Referring to the comments made by the public at the recent Scrutiny

Committee including expert advice, there were lots of questions that remained unanswered with residents' concerns not taken into account. He was not aware that the Cabinet Member had addressed those concerns which in the main related to transport links to the proposed settlements, additional flooding risks and the proximity to accessing public transport. He considered that the proposals were being bulldozed through and he indicated that he would not be supporting their approval.

Councillor Ernest echoed the concerns of previous Members in relation to proposals for further development in Barry/Dinas Powys and Penarth. He touched upon existing Planning consent for housing already granted and the estimated shortfall as he understood the Plan proposals. He was concerned that the Plan made little reference to the infrastructure required to support new housing and he made reference to these. He also expressed concern at Welsh Government's decision to sell off land in Lavernock and Sully for housing and the potential impact on Penarth's road network. He also remarked that the housing development in the Vale lacked quality and imagination and he saw nothing in the Plan to address these issues. He indicated that he would not be supporting the Plan.

Councillor Campbell in referring to the Draft Preferred Strategy being built on sustainable transport with good bus links and good train links, but having no control over where everything would be built, it would be local Councillors who would be accountable to residents. She too expressed concern with the Plan and its failure to address infrastructure matters to support proposals for housing developments. She thought the Plan required changing before it went out for public consultation. It was, in her view, that bus and train links were not good and questioned why the Council was not taking control of these matters.

Councillors Driscoll, Champion and Cowpe reiterated concerns raised by previous Members in relation to the impact of the proposed housing developments on existing communities and the lack of detail relating to infrastructure requirements to support new housing and flooding issues.

The Leader, responding to the comments previously made highlighted that all Councillors had had the opportunity to attend one of the comprehensive briefing sessions that had been held. She also clarified that infrastructure would not be discussed at this point in the development of the Plan, that would be addressed following the receipt of applications and in relation to the larger sites. Turning to Councillor Mahoney's comments, she reminded him that the decision to withdraw the service to the Bendricks was a decision made by the bus operator. Referring to comments made by Councillor Campbell, the Leader thought it would be better if the Council could do all the matters Councillor Campbell referred to alone, but it was not possible and much the Council did was dependent on partnerships and collaboration with others and was the nature of local government.

On the matters raised by Councillor Franks, the Leader reminded him of the housing need in the County and the many comments she had received were about when the developments would be progressed and not criticising housing development. There was a housing and homelessness crisis in the Vale and the

Plan and Policy was to build out of the homelessness crisis. It was important to set the Replacement Plan right and she looked forward to everybody's contribution when the Plan went out to consultation. The report from the consultation would be considered by the Cabinet and available for discussion and she looked forward to a constructive discussion at that time.

Councillor Perry concurred with the Leader's comments that there had been a lack of constructive comments on the matter when it was considered at the recent Scrutiny Committee mostly by her Group. He was generally unhappy with the Plan in substance and direction and he did not think it was ready for public consultation for those reasons. He thought more time should be spent on getting it right and he indicated that he would be voting against it.

Councillor Dr. Johnson referring in the wider context of the RLDP felt that there had been a relative lack of progress on the Strategic Development Plan across the Cardiff Capital Region and particularly the effect that this had on the County due to its interrelationship between both the home and labour market between Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan and the changes in the population that arose as a result of it. He had listened to the debate and the competing arguments in support and those not in support of the Plan. The Plan, in his view, represented what Council officers and housing builders had determined. He also touched upon the pace and scale of house building in the Vale, the rate house prices had increased including rents, the scarcity of affordable housing and the use of Section 106 agreements, all of which were not being met by the proposed Plan. The Council needed to decide if Section 106 was going to be a priority to deliver housing to address local housing market assessments. He appreciated further detail may be provided possibly in the Deposit Plan, but certain information was needed particularly because planning applications were under consideration and made reference to 228 units at Leckwith and pre-application consideration on other relevant sites.

He also reiterated earlier concerns raised relating to the resilience of public transport arrangements in the County serving the eastern and western parts of the Vale and the need to consider how existing and new communities could be served in a more sustainable manner and he felt that there was a need to rethink these matters.

Councillor Wilson reminded Members that it was important for the Council to have this Plan in place. Referring to the criticism, he was sure that all Members wished to have control of housing developments in the Council and he agreed with Councillor Dr. Johnson's comments made in relation to Section 106 funding to support the development of infrastructure. It was a fact that the Vale of Glamorgan was a desirable place to live and as a consequence house prices had increased considerably. New larger developments needed to be considered in the context of infrastructure and sustainability matters and to make the necessary improvements communities wished to see developed. He was a great advocate of sustainability as people were happier, there was less crime, there were less problems and younger people were needed to move into the County in order to create jobs, employment so they could support the older population.

The Cabinet Member, Councillor Sivagnanam thanked all Members for their comments and hoped that Members would feed those comments into the consultation on the Preferred Strategy. She thought that the Conservative Group's comments were at odds with each other as on one hand the Strategy was being criticised for planning for growth, and on the other hand it was not ambitious enough. She would not apologise for planning for growth which would bring about infrastructure improvements. The Strategy would provide for sustainable economic growth through regeneration. It was not just about new development, it was also protecting and enhancing the most important parts of the natural and built environment in the Vale, and it would be crucial in responding to the nature and climate emergencies that the Council had declared. She was confident and assured that the Strategy was ready to go for public consultation. In concluding, Councillor Sivagnanam indicated that the public consultation period would be extended to 10 weeks.

A Recorded Vote took place on the report recommendations.

<b>Members</b>	<b>For</b>	<b>Against</b>	<b>Abstain</b>
Anne Asbrey		√	
Julie Aviet	√		
Gareth Ball	√		
Rhiannon Birch	√		
Bronwen Brooks	√		
Gillian Bruce		√	
Ian Buckley	√		
Lis Burnett	√		
Samantha Campbell		√	
George Carroll		√	
Charles Champion		√	
Janice Charles		√	
Millie Collins		√	
Marianne Cowpe		√	
Pamela Drake	√		

Vincent Driscoll		√	
Anthony Ernest		√	
Christopher Franks		√	
Wendy Gilligan	√		
Emma Goodjohn	√		
Ewan Goodjohn	√		
Stephen Haines		√	
Howard Hamilton	√		
Sally Hanks	√		
William Hennessy		√	
Nic Hodges		√	
Mark Hooper		√	
Catherine Iannucci	√		
Gwyn John	√		
Dr. Ian Johnson		√	
Susan Lloyd-Selby	√		
Belinda Loveluck-Edwards	√		
Julie Lynch-Wilson	√		
Kevin Mahoney		√	
Michael Morgan	√		
Jayne Norman	√		
Helen Payne	√		
Elliot Penn	√		
Sandra Perkes	√		
Ian Perry		√	



Joanna Protheroe	√		
Ruba Sivagnanam	√		
Carys Stallard	√		
Neil Thomas	√		
Rhys Thomas		√	
Margaret Wilkinson	√		
Eddie Williams	√		
Mark Wilson	√		
Nicholas Wood		√	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>20</b>	

## RESOLVED –

- (1) T H A T the contents of the report and the implications for the Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) timetable be noted.
- (2) T H A T:
- (a) The Vale of Glamorgan Local Development Plan 2021-2036 Revised Delivery Agreement be approved and submitted to Welsh Government for their formal approval.
  - (b) The Replacement Local Development Plan Preferred Strategy be approved for public consultation.
- (3) T H A T following Welsh Government approval of the Revised Delivery Agreement, copies are made available for inspection at the Council's principal office during normal office hours and published on the Council's website.
- (4) T H A T those individuals and organisations previously consulted on the drafting of the approved Delivery Agreement be advised of the revisions detailed within the report.
- (5) T H A T delegated authority be granted to the Director of Place and/or the Head of Sustainable Development to make any further typographical or other minor amendments to the Revised Delivery Agreement as required by the Welsh Government and to the draft Preferred Strategy.

Reason for decisions

(1-5) Having regard to the contents of the report and discussions at the meeting.