# Rhondda Cynon Taf
# Revised Local Development Plan
# 2022 – 2037

# Vision, Issues and Objectives Paper

**Contents**

# 1.0 Introduction to the Issues, Vision and Objectives Paper.

This paper outlines the findings of a key initial stage of the Revised Local Development Plan (RLDP) for Rhondda Cynon Taf. It firstly identifies the social, economic, environmental and broader issues that exist across the County Borough; specifically, those that a Local Development Plan (LDP) should be seeking to address. It then takes these considerations forward to formulate a set of defined objectives and associated aims that the RLDP should seek to achieve over its plan period up to 2037. Alongside this is the framing of these issues, objectives and aims into a more concise Vision for the RLDP.

The identified outcomes are therefore seen as a significant part of the foundation and preparation of subsequent stages of the RLDP.

# 2.0 How the Issues, Vision and Objectives were derived.

Varied and comprehensive evidence was gathered to inform the final Issues, Vision and Objectives for the RLDP. The format of this paper sets out the proposed Issues in section 3, the Vision in section 4 and the Objectives and Aims in section 5.

This section will briefly outline the origin of all the evidence that informs these proposals. This includes both the existing written evidence that we should be according with, along with the results of considerable qualitative engagement that has been undertaken. The Appendices at the end of the report set out in detail, (or in a summarised form where the scale of outcomes dictate), the outcomes of the interactive engagement processes that have been carried out.

**Existing evidence**

Firstly, it is necessary to align the formulation of this paper and its intentions with a host of national, regional and local regulation, policy and plans; seeking to incorporate their broad requirements. The identification of Issues and then the formulation of the Vision and Objectives of the RLDP, should be in general accordance with them.

Understanding the broad requirements and intentions of National planning policy in Planning Policy Wales (edition 11) and Future Wales – The National Plan 2040, along with wider guidance is fundamental to the preparation of the RLDP. Major changes have taken place in this area since the preparation of the current LDP, which has had a significant effect on the baseline evidence that informs the plan, its content and principles.

The overall Preferred Strategy should comprise of an overarching vision, strategic issues, key aims/objectives, including the relationship to the National Sustainable Placemaking Outcomes and principles. All these Outcomes have therefore been considered for the identifications and formulation of the Issues, Vision and Objectives in this paper.

Significant new requirements have also come forward through the Well-being of Future Generation (Wales) Act. The emergence of greater national priorities such as climate change and the low carbon economy, green infrastructure and other Well-being of Future Generations considerations are not appropriately addressed in the current LDP. These should now be so, if we as a Council are to ensure we are undertaking our responsibilities, as we should.

More regional and localised considerations are also incorporated into the outcomes of this paper. This includes the Council's own Corporate Plan - Making a Difference (2020-2024) which sets out the Council priorities for RCT over the plan period and therefore issues relevant to the RLDP preparation. The details of these are set out in Appendix 1 of this report.

The Cwm Taf Morgannwg Well-being plan and well being assessment have also identified a number of issues which are specific to RCT. These are set out in Appendix 2. Other considerations include the National Resources Wales Area Statements and Cardiff Capital Region aspirations.

Another key contributor to identifying appropriate Issues, Vision and Objectives was through the analysis of the Annual Monitoring Reports (AMR's) from 2012; that culminated in the Review Report 2019 (along with subsequent AMR'S). The Review Report and AMR's should be considered sources of evidence in their own right, although Appendix 3 below indicates some stand out considerations that are to be incorporated in this paper and in the overall RLDP

A further parallel process to the preparation of this paper has been the development of the Integrated Sustainability Appraisal for the RLDP, in particular the initial Scoping process. This is again a piece of formal evidence base associated with the preparation of the RLDP Preferred Strategy, although the issues identified there are shown in Appendix 10.

**Evidence from Engagement**

It should however be acknowledged that the greatest qualitative contribution to the identification of Issues, Vision and Objectives of the RLDP, was from the extensive engagement that took place with multiple groups, organisations and the general public alike. The full detail of the breadth of the consultation may be seen in the ***Pre-Deposit Stage Consultation Report***, which itself again forms an evidence base document for the Preferred Strategy.

This engagement involved several extended periods of public consultation on the Council's website in 2021 and early 2023; whereby people were asked what were the main issues that they would wish to see the RLDP address. This engagement also took place with a broad range of other public bodies and private companies.

There are several LDP forums that have been created, with multiple engagement events taking place for them; where views were contributed and inputted into the process. These include the main LDP Forum (containing all statutory consultees such as NRW and the health board and other external colleagues), the ISA Forum, and the

Housing Stakeholder group.  There have also been further Council wide officer group meetings, along with more bespoke groups such as the Climate Change steering group and the Nature's Asset group. A bespoke RCT Members Steering Group has met on multiple occasions to raise issues and propose suitable objectives. All Community Councils have also been engaged.

The details, or summaries of all these engagement contributions are set out in Appendices 4 through to 9. As mentioned above, these are summarised and combined in many places as the original comments were so broad in number and length. It is considered that this comprehensive engagement has been undertaken to comply with some initial requirements of Regulation 14 of the LDP preparation process.

The following sections 3 to 5 of this paper set out what are subsequently considered to be the most appropriate Issues, Objectives and Vision to take forward into the following stages of the RLDP.

## 3.0 Issues in Rhondda Cynon Taf

As part of the preparation of the RLDP it is necessary to gain an extensive understanding of the issues that exist in RCT that need to be addressed through the RLDP. It is important to note that not all issues identified will be able to be addressed in full. Some issues raised, may be valid issues, but not able to be addressed by an LDP.

Once all the responses to the engagements events and processes mentioned in section 3 above were received, it was necessary to refine them down to a manageable and realistic number. A detailed process of understanding what each issue said was undertaken with each issue categorised as appropriate.  These were further refined to more manageable numbers through the summarising and combining of matters that were essentially the same, where appropriate. It is also noteworthy that as part of this process a number of issues were raised relating to specific locations in RCT.

This resulted in a list of 86 **Draft Issues**, under 13 headings for the plan to try and address. These are considered to be open and honest records of the comments and views received by the vast breadth of sources of these comments – although it has not been possible to fully quantify these views. These issues have then been used to create Objectives for the plan to achieve, which it is hoped will go some way to addressing the issues in RCT. The issues in RCT are:

### Housing Issues

1. Affordable housing: There is not enough good quality housing that is affordable across both social and private markets.
2. Empty properties: There are a high number of empty properties in RCT.
3. Sustainable design: Not enough housing has been built to sustainable/ carbon neutral/zero standards.

4. Older persons housing: There is not enough suitable housing to meet the needs of the aging population.
5. Viability of housing: Financial viability to enable housing development is a major issue in RCT, especially in the north and in association with brownfield sites across the County Borough.
6. Access to services, facilities, and social infrastructure: There is a lack of accessible services and facilities in some communities and further housing may make things worse.
7. HMO: Houses in Multiple Occupation have brought some negative impacts to their communities.
8. Quality of housing: The quality of many homes in RCT is poor which affects the wellbeing of residents.
9. Housing and transport : Not all housing has access to adequate transport infrastructure at all levels, including pedestrian, active travel, public transport and highways infrastructure.
10. Design of housing developments: Housing developments need to be better planned.
11. Mix of housing. There is a lack of diversity in the housing market. There is a need for a diverse range of housing sizes and types to be developed for all people's needs.
12. Location of housing across the County Borough: There is a clear imbalance of where new housing can come forward in all parts of RCT, with generally less opportunity in the north. Need to meet demand across all communities with appropriate numbers of houses allocated.
13. There is not enough new housing in some parts of RCT, particularly in the Rhondda Valleys and other areas in the north.
14. Location of housing across the County Borough: Development should come forward in sustainable locations, on brownfield sites in the settlement boundary where possible.
15. Housing and Welsh language: Housing development should support the Welsh language and not be a detriment to it.
16. The need to provide appropriate and sufficient housing for the Gypsy and Traveller community.

### Economy and employment issues

17. Low wages, deprivation, and unemployment: There are high levels of deprivation and unemployment in RCT along with low wages.
18. Education and training: There are lower than average levels of education attainment and training in RCT.
19. Location of employment: There is an imbalance in the scale of employers and employment locations across RCT, particularly north to south.
20. Infrastructure and access to employment: Employment throughout RCT is not easily accessible to all.

21. Diversification and type of employment market: There is not enough diversity or modernisation in the employment market and the building stock needs to be improved.
22. Impact of covid and support for business: Covid has had a negative impact on the economy and business.
23. Employment and town centres: There is not enough employment in town centres
24. Employment Sites: The design of employment sites is often poor and needs to be improved. There are old, unsightly and derelict employment sites in RCT.
25. Need to increase employment and jobs: There are not enough jobs in RCT.
26. The economy: The economy in RCT is not as healthy at it could be.

## Transport infrastructure issues

27. Public Transport: Public transport in RCT is poor with many areas not served with suitable options.
28. Public Transport: Public transport is not frequent enough and integration between modes and services is poor.
29. Electric Vehicles: There is not enough electrical vehicle infrastructure in RCT.
30. Metro: The South Wales Metro needs to be supported through appropriate locations of future development.
31. Congestion and roads: There are major traffic congestion issues around RCT and the road infrastructure needs to be improved.
32. Connectivity and integration: There is poor transport connectivity between all areas within RCT, particularly east to west.
33. Cycling, walking and active travel: Active travel should be encouraged and improved for all.
34. Reducing the need to travel and location of development: There is a need to reduce the need to travel.

## Health and wellbeing Issues

35. Low/poor levels of physical and mental health and wellbeing: There are poor levels of physical and mental health in RCT, and this worse in some areas than others – particularly so in the north.
36. Lack of healthcare provision: There are a lack of healthcare provision and facilities in RCT.
37. Air quality and pollution: There are areas of poor air quality and pollution in RCT.
38. Access to open/green space, outdoors and physical activity: There is not enough good quality, accessible open and green spaces for all residents of RCT.
39. Crime and safety: There are higher levels of some crimes in RCT and people don't always feel safe.

## Natural environment issues

40. Green and open spaces: There is not enough good quality, accessible open and green spaces in RCT.
41. Ecology and biodiversity: The need to protect and enhance designated and undesignated biodiversity features, particularly in line with the nature emergency that has been declared at the national level.
42. Green Infrastructure: The need to protect, enhance and provide further green and blue infrastructure.
43. Water environment: The quality of the water environment in some parts of RCT is poor.
44. Land management: The management of our natural assets should be improved.
45. Landscape: The need to protect and enhance the sensitive landscapes, across RCT and also give consideration to the Brecon Beacons National Park.

## Climate change issues

46. Renewable energy: The need to increase sustainable and appropriate renewable energy development schemes.
47. Flooding: There is a major issue with flooding and its impacts in RCT.
48. Green Infrastructure and carbon storage: There is a need to preserve and enhance green infrastructure and all suitable natural assets that can help to address climate change.
49. Sustainable/ Carbon zero design: Developments need to be designed in a sustainable/ carbon net-zero way.

## Waste Issues

50. Recycling and reuse: There is a need to continue to encourage and improve recycling rates and reduce the generation of all waste.
51. Waste collection: There is a need to ensure developments are designed with waste collections in mind, as certain housing estates are often difficult to collect from.
52. Waste Treatment: Non-recyclable waste disposal must not pollute.
53. Circular economy: There is not enough support for the circular economy.
54. Fly tipping: fly tipping is an issue in RCT.

## Minerals issues

55. Extraction: There should not be more coal extraction in RCT.
56. Issue: Quarry aggregate extraction in RCT should be appropriate and necessary.
57. Mining legacy: there is a need to address the mining legacy and its impacts.

## Culture, heritage and Welsh language Issues

58. Listed Buildings, conservation, and heritage: Listed buildings, conservation areas and heritage assets should be preserved and enhanced.
59. Issue: Listed buildings should be used for tourism
60. Welsh language: There is a need to protect, support and encourage the Welsh language
61. Education: There are poor levels of education in RCT
62. Education: There is an issue with school capacities
63. The arts: the arts are underrepresented and should be supported.
64. Community activities: There is a need to improve community cohesion and create strong communities.

## Community infrastructure issues

65. Health: there is a lack of health care facilities in RCT and access to them is poor.
66. Education: Poor levels of educational attainment
67. Access to Services and facilities: There is a lack of accessible services and facilities in some communities and further housing may make things worse.
68. Design: Design needs to be better in RCT including design out crime.

## Tourism and leisure Issues

69. Tourist accommodation and overnight stays: There is not enough suitable accommodation for the growth in the Tourism sector.
70. Extended visits: Visitors do not stay long enough in RCT.
71. Promotion and support of tourism: There is not enough promotion of tourism.
72. Green/eco/ outdoor tourism: RCT should ensure that its natural assets are positively exploited to increase green/ eco-tourism which is accessible to all.
73. Improvements to tourism facilities and infrastructure: improvements are needed to tourism facilities and associated infrastructure and accessibility to all.
74. Culture and heritage tourism: More needs to be done to promote culture and heritage tourism.
75. Leisure facilities: leisure needs to continue to be supported.
76. Support for tourism business: more support for tourism businesses is needed.
77. Tourism locations: A need to build on recent tourism successes in RCT.
78. Economic benefits of tourism: tourism can help support the economy.

## Town centres and retail issues

79. The new role of town centres and mixed uses: The role of town centres needs to change. The mix of uses needs to change and a flexible approach needs to be taken.
80. Housing in Town Centres: Housing in town centres is welcomed although it needs to be appropriate and suitable.
81. Infrastructure of town centres: better infrastructure is needed in town centres.
82. Fast food: there is a need to address fast food venues, their numbers and their impacts.
83. Investment in town centres: investment in town centres is needed.
84. Principal Towns, Key Settlements and site specific: Consider the need to amend existing retail hierarchy.

## Coal mining legacy Issues

85. Tip safety: there is a need to address tip safety.
86. Reclamation: The barriers to reclamation need to be addressed.
87. Ecology and biodiversity: The ecology and biodiversity of area of mining legacy need to be recognised.

## 4.0 Objectives for the RDLP

In order to address the above Issues, the RLDP has translated them into a series of Objectives. These Objectives are to become central to the RLDP, delivering the plans Vision and will form the basis for future policy development in later stages of preparation.

Once analysed it became clear that the issues fell into the same categories as the ISA Objectives. Therefore, an opportunity was seen to fully integrate the ISA into the RLDP process and because it was appropriate to do so, the ISA Objectives have been used as a the RLDP Objectives. All the Issues that were identified have been transferred to this framework. In order to allow for transparency and greater understanding additional 'Aims' under each Objective have been included. These additional aims identify what types of Issues the overall Objective will try to address and directly aligns with the Issues identified in the consultation exercise.

Although the 15 ISA Objectives have been used it was determined necessary to include 3 additional for the purpose of the RLDP. These are Objectives 16, 17 and 18. The reason this was done is because the evidence suggested these were required for the plan and they form part of other important Council Plans and Strategies. They were also backed up as important areas during the engagement process.

When preparing these Objectives the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Well Being plan and its Objectives have been taking into account to ensure there is synergy between the two plans.

The **Draft Objectives** for the RLDP are:

## Objective 1: Mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change and reduce flood risk

### Associated aims and objectives

o  To support the increase in electric vehicle infrastructure

o  To locate development in sustainable locations.

o  To ensure that existing and new employment locations are accessible to all.

o  To protect, enhance and improve access to areas of good quality greenspace and open space in RCT.

o  Protect, enhance and provide further green and blue infrastructure assets and networks for their multi-functional roles.

o  Better manage our natural assets in RCT in a more cohesive way, seeking to also identify multifaceted benefits from this.

o Increase the production and supply of renewable energy and where possible reduce carbon generating energy consumption.

o To reduce the impacts of flooding and ensure development and communities are not put at risk of inappropriate flooding.

o Better manage, protect and enhance green infrastructure and other natural assets, seeking to identify benefits such as helping to address climate change.

o To promote and where appropriate require sustainable/ carbon net zero design throughout RCT

## Objective 2: Provide an appropriate amount and mix of housing to meet local needs

### Associated aims and objectives

o To provide diversity in the housing market through the delivery of a range of house types and sizes catering for the needs of all communities in RCT.

o Increase the amount of good quality housing that is affordable across both social and private markets.

o To provide viable housing sites in RCT and to encourage the delivery of brownfield development.

o Reduce the amount of empty properties in RCT and bring them back into use for several beneficial reasons.

o Build new development or housing to a sustainable/carbon net zero standard and to retro fit the existing stock where possible.

o To appropriately manage Houses in Multiple Occupation and their impacts.

o To achieve a high standard of design and placemaking in developments.

o To seek to identify suitable sites for new housing development in all parts of RCT to allow for housing need and opportunities for all.

o Provide for the housing needs of an aging population in both new build and within existing housing stock.

o To provide high-quality homes

- The need to provide appropriate and sufficient housing for the Gypsy and Traveller community.

## Objective 3: Promote vibrant communities, with opportunities for living, working and socialising for all

**Associated aims and objectives**

- To provide appropriate, accessible, and adequate services and facilities to existing and growing communities of RCT.

- Promote integrated communities, with opportunities for living, working and socialising for all.

- To create an appropriate retail hierarchy which provides services and facilities at a regional, local and neighbourhood level.

- To seek to support education and training in RCT where possible.

- To achieve a high standard of design of new and redeveloped employment sites.

- To improve the road infrastructure in RCT and reduce congestion.

- To improve the levels of education and training in RCT.

- To ensure there are sufficient school places where populations and school places demand is evolving, particularly where new development occurs.

- To improve the levels of education and training in RCT.

- To achieve a high standard of design for all developments and their occupiers.

## Objective 4: Encourage healthy and safe lifestyles that promote wellbeing and improve overall health levels in RCT.

**Associated aims and objectives**

- To improve the physical and mental health and wellbeing of residents across RCT.

o To support the provision of sufficient healthcare provision and facilities and access to them.

o To protect, enhance and improve access to areas of good quality greenspace and open space in RCT.

o Seek opportunities to tackle crime through planning in RCT, to ensure that people living, working and visiting feel safe.

o Protect, enhance and provide further green and blue infrastructure assets and networks for their multi-functional roles.

o Better manage, protect and enhance green infrastructure and other natural assets, seeking to identify benefits such as helping to address climate change.

o Support the provision of sufficient healthcare provision and facilities and access to them.

## Objective 5: Reduce the need to travel and promote more sustainable modes of transport

**Associated aims and objectives**

o To locate development in sustainable locations which have good access to a range of sustainable transport modes.

o To improve the public/sustainable transport network in terms of quality, location and cost.

o To improve the frequency of public transport and the connectivity of different modes to allow a more wholistic public transport network.

o To support the objectives and delivery of the South Wales Metro.

o To improve the connectivity of public transport in RCT between different areas and different modes.

o To reduce the need to travel through the appropriate location of new development and public transport improvements.

o To improve the active travel network and encourage its use for all.

## Objective 6: Promote, protect and enhance cultural heritage and the built environment.

**Associates aims and objectives**

- o To protect, conserve, promote and enhance the historic environment (listed buildings, conservation areas and heritage assets) as a resource for the general well-being of present and future generations.

- o Seek to develop opportunities to extend the heritage-based tourism industry in RCT.

- o Support the arts culture and associated heritage of RCT.

## Objective 7: Promote the use of the Welsh language

**Associated aims and objectives**

- o To support a thriving Welsh language in association with the identification of locations of development.

- o To support and establish the conditions in RCT which allow the Welsh language to thrive.

## Objective 8: Protect and enhance the quality and character of the landscape

**Associated aims and objectives**

- o To protect and enhance our unique landscapes that may be sensitive to development pressures.

## Objective 9: Protect and enhance biodiversity

**Associated aims and objectives**

- o To protect and enhance biodiversity and ecological features from inappropriate development and its associated effects.

- o Recognise the ecology and biodiversity of area of mining legacy.

## Objective 10: Protect the quality and quantity of RCT's water resources

**Associated aims and objectives**

- o Protect, enhance and provide further green and blue infrastructure assets and networks for their multi-functional roles.

- o Improve the water environment and seek to address the negative effects upon it.

## Objective 11: **Protect and enhance air quality**

**Associated aims and objectives**

- o Seek to improve air quality across the County Borough.

## Objective 12: Promote the efficient use of land, soils and minerals

**Associated aims and objectives**

- o Encourage the delivery of brownfield development.

- o Better manage our natural assets in RCT in a more cohesive way, seeking to also identify multifaceted benefits from this.

- o Ensure all quarry extraction is appropriate, necessary and in accordance with all standards and conditions.

- o Promote efficient and appropriate use of minerals including the safeguarding of resources and ensuring that adequate reserves are allocated to meet local, regional and national needs.

- o Encourage the recycling and re-use of aggregates and building materials where possible.

## Objective 13: Continue to minimise waste generation and promote more sustainable waste management

**Associated aims and objectives**

- o Continue to encourage, support and improve recycling in RCT, whilst supporting the overall reduction of waste.

- o Ensure that new housing estate of all sizes are appropriately designed to allow for larger vehicles to access them, particularly for the collection of waste.

- Ensure that all residual waste that cannot be recycled is disposed of in a sustainable manner that does not create any pollution.

- Support the circular economy to ensure that materials, products and components are re-used and remain in use for as long as possible.

## Objective 14: Provide for a sustainable economy

**Associated aims and objectives**

- To decrease the levels of deprivation in RCT and to seek to support employment opportunities.

- To address the impact of the coronavirus in RCT.

- To provide for a sustainable economy.

- Seek to develop opportunities to extend the heritage-based tourism industry in RCT.

## Objective 15: Provide for a diverse range of job opportunities

**Associated aims and objectives**

- To support existing employment sites across RCT and to seek to regenerate the older and derelict stock of sites. To allocate new employment opportunities in appropriate locations.

- To provide a diverse range of job opportunities.

- To increase the amount of job opportunities in RCT.

- To increase the amount of employment opportunities in town centre locations.

## Objective 16: Promote vibrant, adaptable and resilient Town centres
**Associated aims and objectives**

- Support and encourage an appropriate changing role and diversification of the town or commercial centres and provide the flexibility for them to adapt to change.

- Provide appropriate housing in town centre locations at the right scale that should increase the vitality of the town centres

- o Continue to provide sufficient and appropriate infrastructure in town centres, including the linking of all transport, public transport and active travel modes

- o To create an appropriate retail hierarchy which provides services and facilities at a regional, local and neighbourhood level.

- o To increase the amount of employment opportunities in town centre locations.

## Objective 17: Address the impacts of the mining legacy in RCT
### Associated aims and objectives

- o Appropriately address the risk associated with tips from coal and other mining.

- o Seek to identify options to redevelop brownfield sites that are affected by our mining legacy, both on and below the ground.

- o Ensure there is appropriate reclamation of mining legacy sites.

## Objective 18: To support the growth of the tourism and leisure sector

### Associated aims and objectives

- o To help support the provision of suitable accommodation for the tourism sector.

- o To support the growth of tourism and associated opportunities in RCT.

- o To support the growth of eco/green tourism in RCT.

- o To improve tourism facilities and associated infrastructure and accessibility for everyone.

- o To support the leisure sector and it's evolving needs and development.

## 5.0 Vision

The RLDP must contain a Vision which articulates the overall Objectives and aims of the plan. In accordance with the LDP Manual, it should be a concise and positive statement which contains a spatial land use element which shows an understanding of the area's Issues. It should also reflect geographical differences within an area and be consistent with the well-being objectives and other strategies.

When looking at the above plans and strategies in section 2, there are clear consistencies and synergies between these and the objectives of the RLDP. The themes that are consistent include climate change, health, cohesive communities and the importance of the environment and green space. The **Draft Vision** has been formulated considering all these broad areas of engagement findings, issues identified and the objectives determined, as follows.

**Draft Vision**

Rhondda Cynon Taf is a very distinctive place with a rich history, culture, beautiful landscapes and its friendly communities. What is also distinctive about RCT is the differences between places. The previous LDP started the work of recognising these differences and building on the strengths whilst seeking to address the different challenges faced by each area. This plan will continue this good work and build on the successes it has seen.

The Vision by 2037 is for a more resilient and sustainable RCT;

An area of sustainable, cohesive communities who are healthy, well connected and who have equal access to high quality homes, jobs, services and facilities.

An area more resilient to the challenges of climate change with protected and enhanced biodiversity and green spaces and a well-connected sustainable transport system.

An area with a diverse and healthy economy, supported by a flourishing tourism sector. An RCT that celebrates its heritage and is resilient for the future.

# Appendices

## Appendix 1- Aims arising from Making a Difference the Rhondda Cynon Taf Corporate plan 2020-2024

- Supporting our residents who are older, vulnerable or who have disabilities, to remain independent and have a good quality of life.
- Integrating health and social care and providing support for those with mental health problems and complex needs.
- Encouraging all residents to lead active and healthy lifestyles and maintain their mental wellbeing.
- Improving services for children and young people and ensuring the needs of children are considered in everything we do
- 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.
- Ensuring the County Borough is one of the safest places in Wales, with high levels of community cohesion and where residents feel safe.
- Keeping the County Borough moving, including improvements to roads and pavements and public transport, whilst also improving air quality.
- Getting the best out of our parks by looking after and investing in our greenspaces.
- 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.
- Ensuring we have good schools so all children have access to a great education.
- 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.
- Increase the number of quality homes available and affordable to provide greater housing choice for residents.
- Helping people into work and better paid employment.

## Appendix 2 – Issues arising from the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Wellbeing Plan and Assessment

The Cwm Taf Morgannwg Well-being plan has an over-arching theme of **'A more equal Cwm Taf Morgannwg'**.

The Well-being assessment which informed the plan identified that the communities of RCT, Merthyr Tydfil and Bridgend have much to be proud of but not all communities have fair access to opportunities and face different challenges that impact upon their well-being.

The Well-being assessment has identified a number of issues for the Cwm Taf Morgannwg area to be dealt with by the Well-being plan and also contains issues which are specific to RCT. The issues which will be dealt with as a priority by the WBP are listed here, however during the preparation of the RLDP any issues identified by the Well-being assessment will continue to inform the process.

**Social**

- Well-being levels are below the Wales average
- High levels of deprivation
- Higher levels of mental health issues than the Wales average (Llanharry has the highest level)
- Higher levels of obesity than the Wales average and has the highest in the Cwm Taf Morgannwg area.
- Higher levels of diabetes than the Wales average.
- A higher number of fast food outlets than the Wales average
- Lack of community cohesion for some
- Less people feel safe in RCT compared to the Wales average
- The highest level of crime is in the violence against the person category.
- Higher levels of bad health compared to the Wales average.
- Loneliness
- A need to bring services, facilities and jobs close to where people live
- Increase active travel and public transport

**Economic**

- Lower pay levels than the Wales and UK average
- RCT has 4 areas of deep rooted deprivation as identified by the WIMD
- 28 areas in the most deprived 10%
- Increase use of foodbanks
- Lower levels of education attainment than the Wales average
- Higher levels of adults with no qualification than the Wales average.
- Lower economic activity rate than the Wales average
- Higher economic inactivity than the Wales average
- An increase in the Universal credit claimants since 2019
- A reduction in the number of active enterprises in the retail sector

**Environment**
- Only 27% of households in RCT live near accessible natural green space.
- 16 AQMAs in RCT
- High levels of properties at risk of flooding (fluvial and surface water)
- Poor water quality in some areas (Ely and Taff catchments)
- High number of environmental pollution incidents.
- Significant amount of wildfires including deliberate. Significant increase.
- Poor conditions (unfavourable) of designated sites (SSSI and SAC)

- Landslips
- Tackle climate change

**Culture**

- Lower levels Welsh speakers than the Wales average.

# Appendix 3- Headline Issues arising from the LDP 2006-2021 Annual Monitoring Reports/ Review Report

**Social**

- Lack of uptake and development of allocated sites.
- Significant under delivery of allocated sites in the northern strategy area
- Lack of delivery of strategic sites in the northern strategy area.
- Under delivery of allocated sited in the southern strategy area.
- Significant under delivery of housing in RCT compared with the requirement figure over the plan period.
- Continued need to provide affordable housing
- The evidence on which our housing requirement figures were based have been proven to be incorrect.

**Economic**

- A lack of viability of housing sites, particularly on brownfield sites and in the north
- Low marketability in some areas, particularly in the north.
- Lack of development of employment allocations
- Lack of development of retail allocations
- Some retails centres have a higher than average vacancy level.
- Under delivery of some transportation schemes.

# Appendix 4- Issues arising from the Members Steering Group

As part of a series of visioning engagement exercises the RLDP Members steering group forum were consulted on what they thought were the issues that most affect RCT. The results are included below and include events and follow up questionnaires:

## Housing Issues

- Empty properties throughout the County Borough are causing blight in some areas
- Houses in Multiple Occupation
- Demand for social housing throughout the County Borough
- The targets for affordable housing in policy varies and doesn't always fit the needs
- Density for affordable housing
- Housing should be carbon neutral for both new development and should also be retrofitted where possible.
- Flexibility must be afforded in the North due to lower levels of house building and we need to encourage this
- The North/South strategy needs to be considered and the North must not become a dormitory area
- Residents are leaving areas due to the availability of housing, and specifics such as wanting off street parking
- Lessons need to be learnt from Covid-19 in regard to housing with more space and different facilities for working from home
- Brownfield sites are an issue to be developed as they are costly
- Housing needs other amenities for communities to flourish
- Development in green belt land should be restricted to tourism only properties
- Change planning and building regs to enforce that all future developments, of any kind not just homes, must meet passivehaus standard (Fabric First), must include off street parking; an EV charger; solar PVs and a home battery system and possibly rainwater harvesting.
- There needs to be an acceleration of 1 and 2 bed MMC OSC passivehaus properties to cater for both the social housing lists and homelessness
- More affordable housing needs to be supplied to bring down waiting lists
- Needs to be a supply of 3 and 4 bedroom homes that are energy efficient, as well as 1 and 2 bedroomed properties
- Properties should also be adaptable or flexibly built to be adaptable in the future for ageing populations
- Changing the planning regulations for more flexibility on existing terraced properties  e.g. to allow dormers on the rear or allowing roofs in terraced properties to be raised to created living space in the attics – all where appropriate.
- Large buildings should be looked at for conversion to housing rather than greenfield sites.
- Empty properties should be brought back into use instead of building more new housing.
- The local demand for housing rather than rather than national, centrally led demand should be an important consideration.
- the Tonyrefail community does not want more development in the area.

**Transport Infrastructure Issues**

- Deficit of transport in the South of the Borough
- Lots of housing is proposed with little transport infrastructure
- Encouraging rail facilities such as the Metro will move people off the road
- Highway infrastructure still needs to be built for those in the North of the County Borough to access employment in the South
- Commuters to Cardiff from some parts of RCT are driving because there are no buses or trains
- Housing estates are often not serviced by bus operators because it is not financially viable for them to do so
- Public transport needs to be integrated and accessible
- Rail routes that are proposed for the Metro need to be safeguarded
- Electric Vehicle charging infrastructure in terraced housing is a major issue
- Some train lines flood in the County Borough
- Outlying communities still need access to transport and can't be disadvantaged
- The extension of the Rhondda Fawr line from Treherbert to Tynewydd
- Establishment of cycle paths in the Rhondda Fawr as part of Active Travel plans
- A by-pass for Stag Square, Treorchy to ease traffic
- Pedestrianizing the main shopping street in Treorchy would enhance shopping experience and improve footfall
- Main strategic problem for transport in RCT is the tight topography in the valleys
- Some valleys have no train lines as an alternative to the bus or car
- There are pinch points leavings the valleys towards Cardiff, at both Pontypridd to the A470 and Talbot Green to the M4
- Rapid transport into the Rhondda Fach that is not dependent on the road system
- System to linking the Metro rail to hard to reach communities such as Clydach Vale, Cwmparc, Cwmamman
- Dual the remaining A4119 from Coedely to Tonypandy, new junction to the M4 to cater for extra houses being built in the Taff Ely area
- Complete the link road from Cynon to the Heads of the Valleys road
- Extra rail lines to Hirwaun and Ponyclun/Talbot Green
- Future ways of linking up the valleys from East to West at several points, not just relying on North/South corridors
- The most urgent issue is the network of community EV charging points, solutions in terraced homes and possibly hydrogen refuelling points
- Maximise conversion to EV transportation
- Cross-ticketing of services and costs brought down
- Road and rail links (from the Rhondda to Llantrisant and to the M4) need to be improved to relieve the pressure on existing communities and certainly before more housing is developed in these areas.
- The Rhondda has become 'locked' from a highways perspective

**Economy and Employment Issues**

- Remove the waste management designation in Hirwaun industrial estate to encourage mixed use development
- Tourism should be promoted to benefit the economy
- Applications for tourism accommodation should be encouraged and the plan should reflect the need to improve facilities
- SMEs and start-up businesses should be encouraged
- The retail market is diversifying, and the plan needs to be adaptable in these areas
- A new model in town centres should be to encourage businesses, like flexible office space
- Business start-up mini factory sites and offices
- Technology/STEM/Energy hub working across all sectors
- Encourage MMC OSC facilities to come to or start up in RCT and possibly in collaboration with the council

## Health and Well-being Issues

- Moving cars away from petrol and diesel to Electric Vehicles may be slow due to the provision of infrastructure
- Air pollution and quality is a challenge that needs to be addressed
- There is a shortage of healthcare facilities, and some primary health care is not fit for purpose
- Healthcare is under pressure from Covid-19 and the plan could be developed around this
- The importance of mental health and access to green space
- Access to open space within RCT could be improved, by formalising informal accesses for example
- Hirwaun strategic site should be re-designated for tourism, health and well-being
- Air quality could be improved in areas such as Tylorstown by using a light rail, helping people off the road
- Encouraging people to be active, walking and cycling to work would improve both individual health and air pollution

## Natural Environment Issues

- Strengthening green wedges is important as they offer protection for local people
- We need to learn lessons from Covid-19 and the value of green space
- Education could play a role in teaching people about the countryside code
- The opportunity to create parks in the County Borough should be explored and will help in the long term

- Ecological issues are often ignored for affordable housing permissions and the plan should be protecting ecology
- Creating better access to the wooded areas in the upper Rhondda, with better sign posting
- Hard woods should replace conifers
- Local people should benefit environmentally and economically from the forests
- Green open space should be attractive for tourism, especially green tourism
- New developments should have a water management plan
- Encourage wildflower areas and improve peat bogs
- Plant more native broadleaf trees
- Bring back woodland management and utilisation of the woods by communities such as Welcome to Our Woods

## Climate Change Issues

- The impact of development on flood plain
- The logic of consenting wind farm development on land that is a high risk coal tip and results in the removal of peat
- The encouraging of renewable energy development needs to be balanced with the environmental cost
- Local residents may not be happy with the priority areas set out in the NDF
- Renewable energy can be improved in certain areas
- The potential for hydro energy should be explored
- Electric Vehicle charging needs to be factored into development and provision needs to be increased
- Develop peat bogs to slow the draining of water and help retain carbon
- Encourage more green energy schemes and aid if possible, especially community based
- The new RLDP must address or mitigate historic or any further carbon production
- Drastic action must be taken if we are to meet net zero carbon by 2030, such as limiting all buildings to be a minimum of passivhause standard
- any additions to the building such as solar PVs or rainwater harvesting, or batteries etc possibly may make the properties carbon neutral
- Regulations must be changed by Welsh Government to make climate change a stringent standard
- new flood management systems to meet the higher water need and incorporate ways of generating energy from the new systems at the same time

## Waste Issues

- Any treatment of waste should be non-polluting
- Waste treatment will help achieve targets and we need to be forward thinking
- We need to reduce waste and find solutions to prevent people from using too much

- The circular economy, re-using materials
- Build on the work in Bryn Pica regarding the circular economy, re-using what would have traditionally gone to landfill
- Circular economy
- Encourage the public to continue recycling
- Set up more repair shops, collaborating with communities
- Further collaboration with other authorities and private industry
- Find innovative ways to re-use waste products

*Minerals Issues*

- Minerals in RCT are high grade and in demand and we have to make decisions that are unpopular
- Mineral extraction should not be a priority
- Some communities are unsure about minerals regulations and the enforcement of these
- Investigate ways to remediate waste coal tips in RCT
- Mining for carbon products should not be an option
- Searching for eco-friendly uses for minerals, such as eco-option building materials

**Culture, Heritage and Welsh Language Issues**

- Some issues around the retention and preservation of heritage, in particular Listed Buildings that are left in states of disrepair
- Planning policies need to be more flexible to allow the conversion of Listed Buildings and buildings in Conservation Areas, where they are appropriate. Alternatives to housing for example can feed into the overall attractiveness of the town centre
- Is it better to demolish an existing historic building if it is causing blight and is in disrepair?
- Is tourism a suitable alternative use for historic buildings that are in states of disrepair?
- The importance of access to Welsh language education and housing is not always considered in development decisions
- The consideration of Welsh medium education in the consideration of major developments
- Needs of Welsh medium education facilities
- The Council should consider the development of bilingual communities, and this should be considered in the RLDP
- All of these elements are attractions to tourism
- Working with communities and local companies to create offerings and activities

**Community Infrastructure Issues**

- Housing developments are not always able to provide for the demand that exists, in particular healthcare facilities
- Ensure consultation with Cwm Taf health board
- Lots of healthcare in the south of the Borough is already oversubscribed, and housing developments puts further pressure on these services, some of the healthcare in the North of the Borough also needs improving
- Services and facilities should be local and as close to communities as possible
- Balance for the availability and location of services, for example, services need to be fit for purpose and that may require travelling
- All new community/Health/Education buildings as well as being passivehaus should be flexible use in design to allow a myriad of uses in the one space

**Tourism and Leisure Issues**

- Need to determine how the Tourism Strategy feeds into the RLDP
- The potential for strategic sites to be allocated for Tourism, for example building on the industrial heritage in the North of the Borough, as well as the natural environment
- Strategy (Tourism and RLDP) must build on the recent successes of Zipworld and positively exploit the natural environment
- The RLDP should be supportive of tourist accommodation for short stays
- The need and demand for tourism accommodation is now, and policies need to be flexible
- Capacity in the planning department to respond to increasing applications
- We want to encourage people to visit RCT and stay overnight
- How to create the infrastructure to support accommodation and overnight stays of visitors to the area
- Due to the availability of facilities and services, people may visit places like Zipworld and then leave RCT to stay overnight and spend money elsewhere
- There needs to be resources or structures in place to accommodate overnight stays
- A mix of accommodation should be available for people to stay, including low-cost
- Formalising walking routes with signposts and encouraging access
- A list of attractions need to be drawn up to help encourage people to visit other tourist attractions in the County Borough, rather than just one
- Developing tourist attractions in more remote areas, there is a lack of facilities such as shops and toilets
- Access to cycling as well as walking routes
- Loss of bridleways over the years and this should be looked at and improvements encouraged
- Leisure facilities such as theatres and sports should also be considered
- Access to walking routes are not always suitable for disabled people, and where it is possible to have access this should be considered
- Transport and travel associated with accessing Tourism facilities needs to be adequate, as at present it is challenging
- Lack of suitable car parking at Tourism sites

- Training and support for local businesses to respond to the increased demand of Tourism
- Open the Rhondda tunnel for cyclists and pedestrians
- Tourism could boost the economy but major investment is needed in a mix of accommodation, including green tourism
- Make green areas attractive for tourism and use natural environment as a tourism draw
- Involving communities in the creation and provision of tourism
- Create activity tourism offerings, building on success of Zip World, Bike Park Wales
- Provide land to organisations and communities to enable tourism/eco-tourism/eco-economic development
- Help or work in partnership with groups and communities to get tourism businesses off the ground
- Change regulations to allow tourism to be built in green areas
- There has to be a network of attractions that would enable the visitor to have enough to do to encourage them to stay in our area for a period rather than just having day visits from other areas.
- It requires a network headed by the council who will aid in the booking of accommodation, buying tickets to attractions, marketing, etc.

## Town Centres and Retail Issues

- Town centres need to reflect reality and we need to consider what the way forward is
- The strategy the Council is using is the right strategy and is promising for the future
- Town centres need to diversify and be places to work, live, socialise and provide services
- The Council should look to build on the recent success of Treorchy
- A mix of uses in town centres could be a way to move forward, for example residential on upper floors and retail on ground floors as seen in Aberdare
- The Rhondda does not have a principal town and is there capacity for there to be one designated
- Retail has changed and large commercial units have been vacant long-term, attracting investment is a challenge
- Retail capacity needs to be assessed
- Some issues in the County Borough are retail areas are too large and spread out, retail should be concentrated in one small area
- Is road and travel connections to town centres in the County Borough an issue in attracting visitors and users? For example, Merthyr Tydfil attracting larger brands rather than RCT
- The type of housing in town centres needs to be considered,
- The SPG on HMOs needs to be looked at
- Accommodation in town centres needs to be safe, and appropriate. There are often issues with refuse collections, for example and this needs to be avoided

- Retaining retail in ground floor units (with upper floors as residential) is a challenge, the footfall is there but the retail offer isn't
- Other uses in town centres should be considered
- Need a town chamber of trade to work together on best practice
- Public transport links need to connect easily in town centres to reduce the need for cars
- Facilities for leisure in town centres
- Better access to toilets in town centres
- Further investment in developing town centres
- Strategy for attracting medium to large sized stores back

**Coal Mining Legacy Issues**

- There have been issues recently in the Rhondda as a result of flooding
- Some allocations are former coal mining sites and are in the floodzone
- There is the issue of contaminated land and the viability of development, with developers claiming it is too expensive to deliver good quality housing
- Where developers are on-site, we need to get the best value we can for these sites
- We need to learn lessons in reclaiming the coal legacy
- Not all of the coal mining legacy sites are in public sector ownership, and there are issues with the accountability of the Coal Authority
- There is no future for those tips that are mineral rich
- Safety is the priority with these sites, both underground and overground
- Funding from WG and UK government will be necessary to make these tips safe
- Land reclamation schemes should be undertaken in tandem with removal/safety works
- Lots of coal tips are rich in biodiversity and could be a benefit to the community
- Need to increase the monitoring of tips, given climate change and inclement weather

**Other Topics Issues**

- Conservation areas need to be strictly adhered to
- More needs to be done in conserving older buildings to stop disrepair

- Sites for tree planting should be considered, recommendations from climate change sub-groups

- The railway lines in the County Borough are effected by flooding, and more sites have been acquired for rail development that also floods

# Appendix 5- Issues arising from the LDP Forum

These include issues from both the LDP forum meetings and the follow up questionnaire

*Housing Issues*

- Designing out crime reduces crime by 80% for the lifetime of a building and the LDP needs to include this
- Existing issues with HMOs and crime, current policy needs to be strengthened
- Needs to be a balance between active travel agenda and designing out crime in housing developments
- Good and safe connectivity provides surveillance
- Quality of private rented accommodation and market housing
- Post Covid-19 circumstances will increase inequalities in housing
- Need to have viable and deliverable sites early on in the process
- Joined up thinking to tackle placemaking agenda
- Not many sites in RCT will be big enough to demand new services and facilities such as schools
- Long term strategy for maintaining facilities in new developments
- Developments and allocations need to be located in places with good existing active travel and public transport routes
- Opportunities to revise SPGs to fit the new LDP
- Issues with water are localised per catchment
- Provision of diverse forms and types of housing is associated with increased physical activity
- Poor quality housing is linked to physical and mental ill-health
- Provision of mixed land use and affordable housing is associated with safety
- Improving the quality and affordability of housing is important
- Consideration needs to be given to the housing needs of elderly population
- Place-making should address social isolation
- Need to take into consideration the Socio-Economic Duty
- Improvements need to be made to the quality of homes in the private rented sector
- Housing can impact hugely on healthcare provision. This needs to be looked at together.
- Permeability in housing estate design needs to be considered more carefully
- Need to match housing with services. Lack of services in areas can lead to isolation and is bad for mental health.
- Need to design out crime

*Transport Infrastructure Issues:*

- Topography of the valleys means long journeys and this can be costly on public transport
- Can take some people in the County Borough several separate journeys to access hospital facilities

- Investment in infrastructure that provides well designed and inclusive trails can increase physical activity
- Covid-19 has highlighted inequalities in access and barriers to healthy environments
- Transport infrastructure needs to be improved and reduced reliance on car use
- Infrastructure should prioritise walking and cycling
- The Healthy Weight Wales Delivery Plan contains a number of strategic commitments to active travels, the RLDP should maximise these opportunities
- Extend incentives to encourage people back on public transport
- Air quality also needs to be improved using Marmot's principle of 'proportional universalism' whereby resourcing and delivering of universal services is done at a scale and intensity proportionate to the degree of need
- Areas with easy access to the M4 can become easy 'get away' areas for criminal activity.
- A4119 corridor is gridlocked especially at peak times.


## *Employment and Economy Issues*

- Role of the LDP in supporting the local economy through progressive procurement, social value contracts and spending local
- The impact of Covid-19 on employment types and trends such as working from home
- Transport doesn't always serve employment areas and better connectivity is needed
- Central South Wales valleys has experienced high business closures during Covid-19
- Recovery should focus on economic equity, integration of key measures such as the living wage, good employment practices
- Covid-19 economic crisis is going to lead to another health crisis, particularly in those areas where poor quality work and high levels of unemployment were prevalent before the pandemic
- Targeted support for wages and employment will support health, livelihoods and reduce inequalities
- Improving training and work prospects for young people by extending offers of apprenticeships and training
- Priority should be to reduce unemployment and build skills
- Build on actions to increase local recruitment into all jobs and work with employers to improve retention rates.
- Increase funding for adult education more in more deprived communities and link to job market demands. Offer training and support to older unemployed adults.
- Incentivise the private sector to participate in training and skills development.
- Need jobs to go along with the housing
- Commercial burglary is really high in the Taff area

*Health and Well-being Issues*

- Role of LDP in tackling obesity through fast food units and access to green spaces
- The need to plan services and facilities around health and well-being
- The geography in the north of RCT does not lend itself to large health centres and patient flows generally travel South
- Working from home agenda may lead to an increase in obesity
- Buildings can be designed to help with obesity such as putting stairs at the front of buildings and lifts at the back
- Reduction of takeaways near schools and community by using SPGs
- Population numbers need to be taken into consideration in primary care
- Active travel will help with health and well-being with access to green spaces
- Trees on streets has a better impact on mental health and can help tackles air quality
- Reducing inequalities and improving health and well-being are the most important strategic issues
- The health and well-being of communities within RCT has been detrimentally affected by Covid-19
- Main population health challenges in RCT have been identified as facility, obesity, inequalities and loss of well-being (FOIL)
- in RCT people live the last 20 years of their lives with ill health/disability, which has implications for health and social care services, as well as quality of life for those individuals
- Males in the more affluent areas of the borough live 6.7 years longer than those in the least affluent areas, with the corresponding difference for females being 4.3 years
- In general, life expectancy increases from north to south in the borough
- In RCT, 63% of the adult population are overweight or obese, which included 28% who are obese
- An integrated, multi-agency approach is required if the rise in obesity is to be halted, and eventually reversed.
- Exposure to air pollution negatively impacts on health and well-being
- There is a correlation between the highest levels of nitrogen dioxide and the highest levels of deprivation
- Air quality can be improved through establishing green infrastructure, promoting active travel and sustainable transport, providing a fully integrated transport system, developing well connected, active and social communities and through reducing traffic congestion and emissions.
- Urban tree planting also reduces particulate pollution and atmospheric carbon.
- The RLDP should consider an exclusion zone for the establishment of hot food takeaways around schools and communities, this could sit around other policies to create a healthy food environment such as:
  - Support to increase the availability of healthier food options on our high streets;

- - Procurement and contracting in the public sector supporting the purchasing and selling of healthier food and drink;
  - A Refill Nation, where access to free drinking water will be common place in our cities, towns and communities;
  - Supporting local food businesses to develop healthy food choices and to increase more local food growing opportunities, which will impact on the environment and support action on climate change.
- Actions on health must be taken universally but with a scale and intensity that is proportionate to the level of disadvantage

*Natural Environment Issues:*

- Access to the natural environment is associated with positive health outcomes
- Access to safe, natural place outdoors has been shown to improve children's physical and emotional well-being
- Improvements should be made to the quality, signposting and access to existing green spaces
- Prioritise provision of new green spaces in areas of higher deprivation
- Ensure Open Space Strategies and Transport Plans provide and facilitate access to, green infrastructure
- Provision should be made for high-quality natural green open spaces of different sizes that are easy to access from dwellings
- Engage individuals, groups and communities in designing and delivering interventions that encourage access to and sustainable use of, the available spaces through the life course

*Open Space and Ecology Issues*

- Surveillance of open spaces are important and potential problem areas need to be designed out
- People will not use public open space if it is perceived to be unsafe

*Climate Change Issues*

- Keep LDP policies aligned with national policy wherever possible on climate change
- Communities in RCT have experienced repeated floods, and it is widely known that floods are likely to become more frequent as the effects of climate change develop
- The impact of flooding on mental health should not be underestimated
- Planners and developers have a responsibility to ensure future developments are sustainable and do not increase flood risk to the site or surrounding area.
- Development taking place in North Cardiff could have an impact on flooding in Taffs Well

### Minerals Issues

- Security of explosives and police should be consulted on the safe storage of materials
- Prevention of further climate change
- No further development of mineral extraction that could increase global warming e.g., coal
- Coal Authority records indicate there are over 3900 mine entries, recorded and unrecorded shallow workings, mine gas sites, surface hazard and surface coal extraction
- A policy should be included in the RLDP that requires development proposals in areas where coal mining legacy has been identified as posing a potential risk to surface stability are supported by a Coal Mining Risk Assessment

### Culture, Heritage and Welsh Language Issues:

- Relates to people's well-being, connection to their communities
- Promote opportunities for community engagement in these areas, whilst being mindful not to exclude non-Welsh speakers

### Community Infrastructure Issues

- Flexibility for older people and care accommodation
- Secure design standards will reduce maintenance costs
- Access to and availability of services provided in good quality local facilities promotes health and reduces inequalities in health
- The RLDP presents the opportunity to integrate community and health, similar to the health and wellbeing village in Bridgend
- Building and regenerating complete and compact neighbourhoods with local services at the centre also contributes to increasing physical activity levels, safer roads and enhanced social participation
- Public engagement and co-production with communities should be an essential component of any healthcare development in RCT
- Build on Community Resilience Hubs and Neighbourhood model in RCT, using vacant buildings to respond to community needs
- Worth with the Police to ensure Secured by Design is incorporated into the RLDP
- The RLDP should influence strategies of health boards and local authorities to include the delivery of services from local shared infrastructure Operationally:
  - Provide health and social care services from local, shared use facilities
  - Provide community facilities that are easy to get to, conveniently located, well signposted, close to public transport and on walking and cycling networks
  - Ensure health and community services have travel plans that promote sustainable and active travel

- Ensure green infrastructure is considered in designs and plans

**Tourism and Leisure Issues:**

- Promotion of the Valleys Regional Park
- Economic development in tourism and leisure to support visitors to the area

*Town Centres and Retail Issues*

- Access to healthy food options
- Important to avoid overconcentration of food outlets as increases anti-social behaviour
- More varied uses to town centre
- RLDP should take into account the Welsh Government planning policy priorities to recover from the Covid-19 pandemic
- RLDP should take into account the National Sustainable Placemaking Outcomes

**Coal Mining Legacy Issues:**

- Action should be taken to address unstable spoil heaps and prevent further landslides

# Appendix 6 – Issues arising from the Internal Officer Working Group including comments from the climate change steering group.

**Housing (including market and affordable) Issues**

- The need for any new developments (including housing) that are brought forward through the RLDP to take into consideration the wider impacts of development, that occur not necessarily on-site but have the potential to exacerbate issues elsewhere.
- The lack of land available for development throughout the County Borough, particularly in the Rhondda Valleys.
- Existing Green Infrastructure (GI) is not always sufficient enough to cater for drainage usage or as green space.
- There is currently not enough GI being delivered through developments and delivery is difficult to enforce
- The viability of housing development within the County Borough
- The current requirements for housing development such as SuDs will have an impact on viability of sites
- The impact of noise pollution and air quality from new development, particularly in the South of the Borough.
- The demand for affordable and market housing development in the North of the Borough.

- The affordable housing percentages requirements in the adopted LDP could be increased.
- Affordable housing is needed as a way to keep local Welsh speakers in the area and encourage Welsh speakers to reside in the area as an alternative to Cardiff.
- The capacity of schools and other services need to be provided for/improved in order to increase housing numbers, particularly in the South of the Borough.
- The impact of housing developments on childcare demand and supply.
- The pressure on housing development in the South as a result of attracting large employers such as DWP and TfW to the area.
- Services and facilities in the South still need to be increased to support the population
- Balance between retaining landscapes and ecological interests and developing houses
- There are often competing priorities for the use of Council owned land between the Council and the aspirations of communities
- The number of empty properties in the North that are not suitable to be used as affordable housing due to the DQR.
- The requirements to retrofit existing housing to meet carbon neutral standards.
- The number of empty properties throughout the County Borough, particularly in the North
- The vast majority of existing empty housing stock cannot be modified or adapted due to their size.
- The Welsh Government has a target of 30% of people working from home on an agile basis and this will inevitably impact on working patterns and housing demands
- Additional housing in areas with a strong Welsh language presence such as Treorchy/Treherbert are a risk to the Welsh language in these areas.
- Increasing numbers of Welsh speakers will in turn increase Welsh language opportunities and workforce availability in the County Borough
- Any housing development must not be to the detriment of Welsh speaking communities
- Service charges in relation to s.106
- Housing should be located in or close to existing settlements, within walking and cycling access to daily services within 15-20 mins
- Achieving housing quality and sustainability in low market value areas will be difficult
- With existing housing stock, how can the RLDP help retrofit for climate change
- New housing development should retain large areas of GI
- Bringing back empty dwellings and properties back into beneficial use.
- Energy Efficiency improvements for future housing developments.


***Transport Infrastructure Issues***

- The impact of Covid-19 on commuting patterns and home working, especially out of the County Borough to Cardiff.
- The provision of localised working hubs will reduce travel to work.
- Provision of transport infrastructure to encourage employment.
- Limited employment opportunities throughout the County Borough, particularly in the North, results in people commuting out of the area
- The lack of transport infrastructure in the North is challenging, including rail and road.
- Transport infrastructure should be in place before development is built out, such as Active travel and public transport routes.
- CIL vs 106 to deliver infrastructure
- The connectivity of public transport – particularly internal connectivity within the County Borough.
- Public transport needs to be accessible and convenient, and sustainable in relation to usage for example late at night and early morning.
- The implementation of the Metro is essential to encourage commuters to use public transport.
- Tourism attractions can lack access by public transport
- Difficulty accessing employment locations by public transport
- The need to reduce travel by helping to ensure services, facilities and employment are local to people.
- Important to prioritise sustainable transport choices and Active Travel
- The South of the Borough is seeing an overspill of people from Cardiff and VOG.
- The lack of Electric Vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure.
- Future development should include provision for EV infrastructure.
- The differences in the North and South of the Borough will mean deprivation will be exasperated by EV provision/accessibility, as it is less likely to be retrofitted in the North.
- The safeguarding of land for future road schemes.
- Travelling by car is becoming more expensive and deprivation is being exasperated by this in the County Borough
- RLDP should focus on '15 minute community concept' where new residential development should only be approved if they are within a maximum 15 minute safe and direct walking/cycling route to key facilities
- Transport hierarchy should be followed when considering transport access at new developments
- Transport and the construction of new infrastructure is closely aligned to the aims, objectives and strategic solutions identified for the other topics set out in the LDP. For example:
  - Tackling Climate Change and improving air quality and the environment by ensuring that new developments have provision for electric vehicle charging and can be conveniently reached by public transport.
  - Improving road safety by reducing the number of car journeys that need to be made and by providing segregated cycle routes.

- o Improving the health and well-being of residents by ensuring that journeys to key facilities can be reached safely and conveniently by either walking or cycling.
  - o Supporting economic growth and the "Levelling Up" agenda by improving connectivity between communities and places of employment.
- Reducing the need to travel
- Equity issues with the rising fuel costs
- How to make the cost of public transport more accessible to people
- Issues of travelling between the valleys and time/cost implications
- Encouraging use of an integrated and sustainable transport system eg active travel considered first with appropriate links to public transport for longer journeys , then use of ULEV/EV car if required, backed up by appropriate infrastructure to meet the demands
- Work with partners to ensure a joined up approach to achieving an integrated transport system. As well as developing an infrastructure which can support movement to use of EV/ULEV on a regional basis, alongside work to encourage use of more sustainable transport options in the future

### *Economy and Employment Issues*

- The Covid-19 pandemic could see an increase in the manufacturing sector
- The impact of Covid-19 on employment, increase in smaller businesses.
- Recovery from Covid-19 could be helped by employment located in town centres
- The growth of localised working hubs from Covid-19 and working patterns.
- If the manufacturing sector sees a comeback, does the local workforce have the relevant skills
- The de-industrialisation of the valleys has resulted in outdated skills.
- Employment has moved away from traditional employment uses.
- The future of technology and what employment will look like in the future
- Skills within the population could be fostered to lead to careers in tourism and education around this needs to be positively promoted
- Encouraging employment to the North of the Borough is challenging due to transport infrastructure
- The road network in the valleys is challenging for employment.
- Difficulty in attracting candidates to employment locations away from major roads, such as A470.
- The lack of land available for development for employment throughout the County Borough
- Large areas of land are often required for employment sites in the South
- South of the County Borough is where employers seem to want to be located
- Any land available for employment sites often doesn't meet requirements
- Some derelict employment sites within RCT could be looked at for other uses
- The functionality of industrial estates, as many older sites are not fit for purpose.

- The design of employment sites needs to be considered and the management of green spaces within them
- The capacity of employment sites to contain renewable energy development such as solar panels.
- New development on industrial estates has been witnessed in the South within established industrial areas.
- Derelict employment sites throughout the County Borough
- The impact on the South of the Borough from attracting large employers such as Transport for Wales and DWP.
- The need to encourage employers to the North of the Valleys
- The impact on noise pollution and air quality of employment development.
- Employment sites are often located in areas prone to flooding
- The accuracy of the adopted strategy for the North and South
- There should not be a reliance on larger employers, the focus should be on the local economy.
- The LDP strategy needs to be able to adapt to climate change and the Covid-19 recovery
- How the RLDP can help with a circular economy
- Increased emphasis on the foundational economy, local jobs providing food, housing, education

### Health and Well-Being Issues

- The importance of green space and access to green space to physical and mental health
- The quality of Green Infrastructure and green space across the County Borough varies.
- High density housing and lack of green space often go hand in hand.
- Green spaces can be a solution to flood risk.
- Green space needs to be prioritised in Town Centres
- The availability of green space locally
- The availability of green space in town centres to coincide with housing
- The longer term impacts of Covid-19 on health and well-being
- Communities need to contain active travel, walkable neighbourhoods and easy access to facilities
- Disparity in the Borough have been shown in the recent floods with many not being able to afford house insurance
- The availability of green space and gaps in the urban environment can reduce the impact of flooding
- The cumulative effect of AQMAs could be a stumbling block to development
- Focus on the determinants of health
- Increasing inequalities in health, life span, death rates
- More green space is needed, due to the association with health

- link heath and well-being opportunities for enjoyment of nature conservation/green space/Living Landscape proposal/parks etc
- The new LDP needs to enhance AW10 to maximise health benefits from any environmental risks

*Natural Environment Issues*

- The biodiversity offer in RCT is unique and should be considered an asset and not a constraint
- Biodiversity enhancement should be included in all planning applications
- The enforcement of biodiversity mitigation measures secured through planning permissions
- RCT is an outstanding and unique place in the UK in relation to habitats and biodiversity and the LDP should promote this
- Opportunities to link SUDs and other initiatives to allow biodiversity to thrive, need to achieve a 'living landscape' with multifunctional space
- The benefits in environmental terms of development needs to be considered on a case by case basis, for example agricultural land vs. biodiverse rich land
- There needs to be solutions for low-cost, sustainable land management issues such as recreation, carbon capture and biodiversity can be multi-purpose
- The management of land throughout RCT needs addressing
- There needs to be an overarching land management policy for GI and flooding
- The quality, size and location of Green Infrastructure within development is important
- Greenspaces that do not provide connections are detrimental to species and is detrimental to biodiversity conservation
- Current Green Infrastructure is not sufficient for drainage use or as greenspace and there is not enough being delivered through development
- More pressure on Green Infrastructure and greenspaces as a result of Covid-19
- Many properties in RCT are at risk of surface water flooding and density of housing, lack of green space is a contributing factor
- Thought needs to be given to how the landscape operates in RCT, and if the plan could be used to mitigate flooding elsewhere
- The visual impact of development on the wider landscape needs to be considered, for example, in relation to flood risk catchment
- Development needs to consider wider impacts, such as flood risk
- The issue of contaminated land still remains
- The frequency of grass fires across the County Borough
- Nature crisis is as severe as climate crisis and has similar drivers
- Reinstate what has been lost in the urban environment to encourage better mental health and well-being
- Emphasise the importance of delivering ecological mitigation and enhancement schemes and commitments if the nature conservation policy is to be satisfied in the new LDP

- Identify the new biodiversity enhancement requirement, and the need to consider biodiversity enhancement measures for even very small development sites
- Need to revisit and if necessary, revise the RCT Bat Survey protocol which was produced after the last LDP and to get a revised version adopted as planning policy.
- Revisit the Nature Conservation SPG.
- Develop a rolling programme of SINC revision and updates that can work alongside the life of the new LDP.
- Develop the RCT Living Landscape project with planning agreement sites includes as evidence of the strategic ecological landscape mitigation and enhancement delivery of the LDP.
- Monitor ecology component of the LDP through delivery of ecological planning mitigation through the Living Landscape Project Retrofit GI within the urban landscape as part of regeneration of our town centres
- Combine both GI with drainage solutions where floods are an issue in urban environment
- Encourage more innovative solutions such as Green Roofs and Green Walls for developments where little GI is currently available. This includes small developments.
- Retain as much GI as possible in planning applications and provide the relevant protection before, during and after the construction phase as well as enforcement actions when not followed
- Enforce better protection of non-TPO trees on site as well as protection of native hedgerows and banks
- Aim to reduce the visual impact on our landscape for all developments including those instigated by RCT
- Green Infrastructure: needs to be relevant across place making, health and wellbeing, nature conservation, climate adaptation, flood risk adaptation, carbon storage, transport corridors etc. and at landscape scale, local scale, site/building scale
- More emphasis has to be placed on GI as it includes such a broad range of environmental solutions.
- Careful use of green infrastructure could assist, with the right green barrier in the right place offering possible urban solutions.
- Utilising green infrastructure should be considered alongside measures to assist flood risk, climate change, soundscape and Air Quality improvements where possible.
- The strategy needs to consider the relevant environmental impacts of existing and future green infrastructure, while recognising the multiple benefits for the various agendas/partners involved.
- Air quality benefits of GI around areas with poor air quality and busy roads
- GI should be promoted in sensitive locations such as schools
- Land management in the LDP will be important to deliver all the strategies tackling climate change, including delivery of new development in terms of climate change benefits and managing natural assets to tackle climate change

### *Climate Change Issues*

- The design of developments is key to deal with surface water flooding
- Lack of focus on surface water flooding in the new TAN 15 and surface water is the main source of flooding
- Variations in rainfall within RCT is vast
- The community perception of developing on flood plains is negative, and people would support policies that reduce this
- The circular economy needs to be a prominent feature of this plan, focusing on construction materials for development and ensure they can be recycled
- New housing development needs to ensure that infrastructure (such as renewable energy) is viable and accessible more widely and not restricted to one site
- The plan needs to consider things such as Heat Networks as cross sector projects
- Solar farms have large amounts of surface water run-off and management of the ground between panels is needed
- The capacity for solar panels to be installed on industrial estates, retro-fitting
- The plan needs to be able to adapt to issues such as climate change in the future
- Need to emphasise that conservation and restoration of the soils of natural habitats is a superior and longer-term carbon store than tree planting
- Need an objective of not planting trees on SINCs which will destroy their ecological value and also damage their already important carbon storage
- Evidence the c700 hectares of carbon storage within the peatbog and habitat restoration secured through S106 Green Energy Planning Mitigation
- Capacity for natural upland flood attenuation delivered through peat bog restoration and grass fire prevention by re-wetting and managing the peatland landscapes
- Ensure the new green energy projects are complementary with SINCs and important habitats and delivers effective ecological mitigation and enhancement
- Providing green spaces and links to the Countryside to reduce the need to drive from home to access the Countryside. Tie in with the Living landscape project objectives
- Encourage use of solar panels on large industrial estates developments as well as use of green roofs on industrial units
- Ensure GI is included within industrial estates developments including the use of SUDs. Encourage more biodiversity opportunities on industrial sites
- The relationship between Climate Change and Air Quality must be recognised to ensure LDP achieves multiple benefits for the relevant environmental agendas.
- The strategy needs to consider the relevant environmental impacts of existing and future green infrastructure, while recognising the multiple benefits for the various agendas/partners involved.
- The Climate Change Strategy and RLDP to potentially be prepared side by side

- RLDP will be informed by evidence from the Climate Change Strategy
- Benefits of using water in disused coal mines to supply warm water to communities
- Taffs Well has a geothermal spring
- The Climate Change Strategy will explore the potential to utilise geothermal energy from disused coal mines
- Green Valleys Organisation exploring hydroelectric schemes and potential for the project to be expanded into the Rhondda Valleys

*Waste Issues*

- The re-use of materials in retail properties (aspirational)
- In order to meet waste targets, education will be key
- There should be an emphasis on the circular economy, waste to be used as a raw material
- Promotion of 'reuse' shops
- Changes to waste legislation will mean changes to trade, commercial waste
- Environmental crime is increasing and enforcement is difficult
- Waste collection is difficult in some developments due to the design of highways and housing, and in particular with recent home working
- Applications that include shared bin storage should be discouraged as it is hard to identify culprits of inappropriate refuse and lack of recycling
- More pressure on local businesses because of Covid-19 to use more single-use plastics that are not easily recycled
- Zero waste
- Circular economy
- RCT needs to comply with Welsh Government's 'Towards Zero Waste' legislation in that our recycling targets have to meet 70% by 2024/2025 and 100% (no recycling in general waste) by 2050.
- Every household and commercial premises in Wales and RCT should consider reducing the amount of waste that they produce firstly by preventing an item from becoming waste in the first instance (reduce), to repair/donate etc an item no longer needed (re-use) and finally use Council facilities to recycle any waste item left over.
- RCT will need to ensure that property developments are given the facilities to store and recycle as much waste as possible.
- RCT will need to continuously research closed-loop recycling within Wales and support local initiatives to extend the list of products that can be made from recyclable materials.
- RCT to comply and support Government's guidelines on 'Producer Responsibility'.
- RCT will need to ensure collection methods, including vehicles, are efficient and do not produce an increased carbon footprint. RCT will need to constantly review how recycling and waste is collected to ensure as much recycled material as possible is recycled and not put into the general waste stream. We can achieve this objective by:

- o Providing up to date information to households and commercial premises on how to recycle waste
- o Work alongside external partners to ensure waste is reduced and re-used wherever possible and provide/support facilities to allow residents and businesses to do so
- o To work with local schools to ensure the next generations are aware of their personal responsibilities to reduce, re-use and recycle their waste
- o To use enforcement methods to prosecute residents/businesses who dispose of waste illegally and partake in environmental crime
- o To use awareness methods to help residents and businesses change their recycling behaviour but ultimately enforcement methods should residents/businesses fail to make improvements
- o To use technology to identify residents/businesses who require assistance in improving their quality and quantity of recycling
- o To use technology to make collection rounds as efficient as possible

## *Culture, Heritage, Education Issues*

- The percentage of the population of RCT with no qualifications is quite high
- School provision needs to be increased in the South and Welsh medium school provision needs to be increased in the North
- General issue around school capacity and lack of sites to develop school extensions or new schools
- The impact of housing developments and changes in population on childcare demand and supply
- The balance of having meeting places available such community centres, libraries to encourage community cohesion and the reduction of these in recent years by the Council from a financial perspective
- Is there scope for s.106/CIL to provide support to heritage assets in the wide area as heritage can contribute to the feel of an area
- There is an issue with how to treat Listed Buildings within town centres, often not financially viable without public sector funding
- Is there a connection between Welsh schools and the number of Welsh speakers, and the impact of housing development on this
- House-build (self-build?) and affordable housing will be an attraction for Welsh speakers from both locals and to attract Welsh speakers to the area
- New housing development in areas where there are a strong Welsh language presence must not be to the detriment of those communities
- There is a duty to support and increase Welsh language, and we must evidence what can be done to positively impact on the Welsh language
- Contribution to 1 million Welsh speakers

## **Minerals issues**

- No more fossil fuel extraction
- How to extract / process minerals without fossil fuel

**Community infrastructure levy issues**

- An opportunity to promote cultural assets of coal mining landscapes more

*Tourism and Leisure Issues*

- The need to consider safety and security for major public developments for leisure and tourism, such as large events like the Eisteddfod
- Green Infrastructure and greenspaces can help promote and attract tourism to the County Borough
- RCT is located on the edge of the Bannau Brycheiniog and this is not promoted
- Capacity to promote natural and heritage landscape assets could broaden tourism offer
- The potential for tourism to be an alternative use for empty properties
- Growing tourism in RCT will help benefit the local economy
- Transport links to tourist attractions needs to be improved
- More green tourism in RCT through the promotion of biodiversity
- Given the immediate proximity of the Llantrisant Business Park to the Common, some cultural/historic recognition of the Common is needed. Can the LDP look again at Commons as cultural rural features?
- Can the cultural section provide some more interpretation of the type of undesignated landscape features which have cultural and historic significance and which deserves greater consideration than they currently receives through the planning process
- How a tourism industry adapts to net zero and in particular to increasing costs of car travel
- tourism section could perhaps look to promote the ecological, cultural and geological/geomorphological importance of the RCT
- Many people enjoy the remoter landscapes of RCT for their peace and tranquillity and balancing the retention of that with the encouragement of more active/intrusive uses of the landscape is an issue which deserves consideration and thought
- Developing and converting old potentially unused buildings as accommodation, also seeking new accommodation for the growth of carbon neutral places to stay
- Identify the empty property strategy for growth of accommodation in the area i.e. North Cynon Valley to support the increase of visitors due to the new attraction Zip World Tower
- Alternative accommodation facilities i.e. motorhome provisions. Identifying areas for investment for glamping and lodges

- Infrastructure and promoting the metro and green tourism innovation travel i.e. electrical charge points, active cycle and walking routes, integrated public transport services (i.e. single ticket for bus and train)
- the LDP to be in line and work collaboratively towards the Tourism Strategy to support the economy i.e.
  - Increase the accommodation offering i.e. town centre unused buildings, land, unused car parks
  - Identify opportunities for green sustainable tourism i.e. bike hire, electrical charging points, public transport links
  - Increase transport infrastructure to support products and attractions throughout the Borough i.e. out of hours services, additional stop offs

- Focusing more on green travel/infrastructure i.e. carbon neutral opportunities

*Town Centres and Retail Issues*

- There are a number of opportunities to be ambitious and bold in regenerating town centres in relation to the flexibility of use (use classes)
- Patterns emerging from investment in town centres from the private sector can encourage further regeneration by the public sector
- There needs to be a balance between community aspirations and reality, and we need to work together to find acceptable solutions
- Demolished properties could provide opportunities for green spaces or community uses in town centres
- Green Infrastructure is often retrofitted into schemes in town centres
- The changing retail landscape as a result of Covid-19 means we need to be realistic about the use of buildings in town centres
- Any housing in town centres need to be of a high design to avoid housing becoming depilated and void. RSLs can be a good partner for this as they have to build to DQR standards
- There needs to be a balance in town centres with housing and the night-time economy. SPG on town centres?
- Developments in town centres often lack parking space, bin storage, and outside space
- Should be the focus for community uses like offices, hospitals, shopping rather than 'out of town'

*Coal Mining Legacy Issues*

- Land reclamation schemes have stagnated due to funding issues
- Many brownfield sites cannot be reclaimed due to the cost and owners often try to push liability to the Council
- Focus on coal tip safety and management
- Lots of sites could be restored from a heritage, recreational and ecology perspective

- There are over 500 disused coal tips in RCT that could be unique for tourism and leisure
- Potential for ground source heating
- In the new LDP it would helpful to see the mining legacy broadened to identify the issues and potential for a delivering positive colliery spoil biodiversity and cultural programme as part of future stability and drainage programmes. In addition, recognising in the LDP the importance of wider brownfield ecology within the broader agenda of brownfield re-use is very important
- This section in the new LDP does need to recognise the complexity of the ecology, landscape, cultural value and safety and development objectives around such sites

# Appendix 7  - Summary of Public Engagement & 'Lets Talk' 2023

**Housing**

- Housing is often poorly planned and not supported by an integrated transport network which includes sustainable options.
- There is a need for Community-led projects to meet long term housing needs and provide affordable housing for local people.
- There is a lack of family size social housing.
- New housing is not supported by transport, healthcare and education and other infrastructure. This puts further strain on existing resources and residents.
- There is inadequate car parking for new housing developments.
- There are not enough affordable houses being built and/or made available for younger residents and those who have been struggling to get a home where they live locally.
- New housing doesn't consider its impact on our road networks and green spaces. Too many houses built in one area, at one time, is more likely have a negative impact.
- More should be done to ensure that houses that are built should be fire-proof and damp-proof. There is a need to ensure the existing housing stock is safe.
- The standards of building in social housing needs to be improved it should be built to the highest standards.
- There is not enough accessible housing within the Rhondda .
- There is too much building on green field land and not enough on brownfield land.
- There needs to be a mechanism to remove/amend areas identified for development as well as creating them.
- Tonyrefail is suffering over development and does not need more housing.
- There are too many housing developments in Tonyrefail and not enough supporting infrastructure.

- There should be new housing within the lower ward of Ynysybwl and Coed Y Cwm.
- There should be a presumption against new housing in the upper ward of due to traffic intensification.
- Building needs to be more sustainable for future communities.
- New housing doesn't generate and store as much energy as it should.

## Economy and employment

- There is not enough local employment close to home which are local enough to towns and villages to encourage residents to walk, cycle or use public transport to get to work.
- There is a lack of investment in towns and villages, focussing on helping businesses and creating jobs. Money needs to be spread to support all groups.
- There is a need to attract more businesses to the Valleys. Existing business spaces should be kept for business.
- More support for businesses is needed to prevent them from closing.

## Transport infrastructure

- There is a need for further safe active travel routes throughout Rhondda Fawr.
- There is a need for more residential parking for those who live on main roads.
- Public transport services in the evening need to be improved.
- Residents should be encouraged to use public transport and discouraged from using their cars.
- Public transport needs to be more reliable.
- Public transport needs more investment, free services and to improve services.
- There needs to be improvements to some public transport routes and stops closer to houses.
- The existing transport system is not integrated.
- The accessibility of bus stops are poor especially due to topography.
- There is not enough ultra secure bike storage at transport links for cyclists
- Not enough bus routes extend into newly built developments to encourage the use of public transportation not driving.
- The electric vehicle charging infrastructure network is poor and needs improving.
- There are major transport issues in the Brynsadler area.
- There are not enough Park and Ride facilities around Pontyclun Station.
- There are not adequate active travel routes in RCT
- Drop off facilities are not considered when building schools. This is a safety issue.
- The rail services are inadequate and should be extended.

- There are not enough active travel routes which include provision for Equestrian users.
- Highway safety is an issue in RCT.
- Public transport in Tonyrefail is poor.

**Health and wellbeing**

- There are poor health care facilities and infrastructure in RCT.
- There is not equal access to the countryside and open spaces for all to improve health and wellbeing.
- Pollution and its impacts needs to be addressed.
- Health care services and facilities in Tonyrefail are very inadequate.

**Natural environment**

- The public rights of way network is not adequate and inaccessible.
- There needs to be more protection for SSSI's
- More protection is needed for biodiversity, green spaces and the environment.
- Too many trees are being cut down for large projects which is causing negative impacts for things such as flooding.
- There is not enough protection is needed for protecting our woodland and local wildlife should be important.
- There is not enough protection for wildflowers and trees and not cut so easily as they are being done. More needs to be done to make greener.
- There is not enough protection for SSSI's and biodiversity and greenspace in Tonyrefail.
- Greenbelts need to be protected.
- There are not enough allotments.
- There is not enough funding for public rights of way and the network needs to be improved.
- There is poor drainage in Tonyrefail.
- There is poor protection for SSSIs.
- Poor provision for horse riders.
- More consideration needs to be given to fungi during the planning process.
- Removal of trees is causing greater flooding.

**Climate change**

- The sustainability of buildings needs to be improved.
- Not enough is being done to achieve carbon zero. There needs to be an integrated strategy.
- There is a need for more community renewable energy.

- Not enough is being done to improve drainage, stop flooding and protect housing.
- Too many applications are being approved on flood plains.
- There are not enough renewable energy schemes.
- Not enough buildings are being built with solar panels.
- Not enough schemes which use heating from ground source where possible

**Town centres and retail**

- Town centres can't compete with out of town retail for convenience
- There are too many vacant and deteriorating buildings in town centres.
- Pontypridd Town Centre doesn't have enough investment in tourism and culture.
- Business rates are too high in Aberdare.
- There are too many vacant properties in Aberdare.
- Too many buildings in Aberdare are being turned into housing.
- There are some villages which should now be considered towns due to recent growth.
- Poor parking in Aberdare town centre.
- Tonyrefail town centre is run down and deteriorating.

**Culture and heritage and Welsh language**

- More protection is needed for conservation areas and consideration given to expanding these.
- Too many chapels have become disused, instead of developing into houses, they should be preserved and re-used.

**Waste**

- Too many people recycle incorrectly.

**Gypsy and Travellers**

- There is a chronic shortage of Gypsy and Traveller accommodation in RCT and this needs addressing as part of the LDP.

**Tourism and leisure**

- Not enough is done to take advantage of our industrial past, many are connected to it. Zip World has done this in creating a business with this in mind.
- Rural communities are disadvantaged in having their businesses promoted. It should be easier to place brown tourism signs on our main roads.
- There is not enough promotion for tourism especially walkers and cyclists.

- There is not adequate transport infrastructure to support tourism.
- A tourism tax would be negative for business.
- Lots of leisure facilities have been lost and should be reinstated.
- Existing facilities need to be expanded.

**Community infrastructure issues**

- New developments do not provide adequate infrastructure improvements on site it is often lost to areas outside of the development area.
- More needs to be done to protect the Welsh education system and encourage the use of Welsh.
- Schools should be open to communities, allowing children to use an area for recreation after school hours.
- Too many rural schools are being closed to the detriment of the local community.
- There is too much pressure on the road infrastructure during school drop off and pick up time.
- Roads are not safe for school children when they are walking along the pavements. More traffic calming measures should be put in place. Lighting is always a concern at dark times of the day.
- Not enough land is available for community groups, organisations and projects.

# Appendix 8- Summary of Issues arising from public engagement on 'Lets Talk' and the RCT consultation page 2021.

*Housing Issues:*

- Development should be contained within settlement boundaries
- New housing developments are not often located close to services and facilities
- Development should be made easier within settlement limits
- Housing must be allocated on sites that are viable and sustainably located
- New housing developments often have issues with parking
- Housing developments are often of a poor quality
- New housing should be environmentally friendly
- New homes should be designed to be visually appealing
- Important for the right type of housing to be developed
- Facilitating partnership working to deliver mixed tenure schemes
- There should be mixed provisions of housing for the elderly, bungalows etc
- Housing for the ageing population with accessible housing
- More housing with supported living elements should be provided
- The number of empty properties throughout the County Borough

- The renovation of existing housing stock or existing land should be prioritised
- Derelict properties should be brought back into use
- Affordable housing needs to incorporate a range of housing types, such as bungalows
- Percentage of affordable housing on new build sites should be increased
- There needs to be more affordable housing
- Ensuring the delivery of affordable housing, including rural exception sites
- Social housing stock should be increased
- New housing developments should include solar power and ground source heat pumps
- RCT lacks deliverable housing allocations
- Brownfield sites need to be attractive, or incentives used to attract developers
- New housing developments should be on existing land and green spaces avoided
- Lack of housing North of the Borough
- Housing must be delivered in the South of the Borough
- Housing stock needs to be retrofitted to help reduce emissions
- RLDP needs to consider climate change throughout the plan
- Eco-friendly developments
- Housing should be built near existing, adequate transport systems
- New housing must include infrastructure for EV charging
- Road infrastructure should be adequate for the size of development
- Creating housing that is both safe and provides ease of access to major transport systems to reach workplaces and areas of interest across the wider RCT
- Increased risk of surface water flooding from new development
- Local people should have more say on whether development fit in the area, consulted on local requirements and needs
- CIL renders open market residential development unviable and should be scrapped and a s106 framework developed
- due consideration must be given to infrastructure, medical services, shops, work opportunities, schools.
- Issues with housing and infrastructure in Tonyrefail
- The development of a conurbation between South RCT and Cardiff
- Preserving and protecting the environment of the Rhondda
- Protection of green spaces are important in the face of climate change
- Grassfires fires and flooding due to tree felling
- Incorporate housing into Green Wedges
- Not enough health care facilities in areas where new housing is proposed
- Residential uses in town centres giving better access to transport and amenities
- Housing development should avoid sterilising mineral resources either directly or indirectly

*Transport Infrastructure Issues:*

- Transport schemes should include appropriate resources assessments and supply chain considerations
- Improvement of public transport
- Remote communities do not have access to public transport
- Frequency and cost of public cost
- Public transport connectivity within RCT and cross border to other authorities
- Safety of public transport
- Existing public transport network is not sufficient
- Consideration of community / voluntary transport and how this can be supported
- Public transport having difficulty accessing new development
- Electrification of travel and/or low carbon initiatives
- Provision of EV charging infrastructure
- Until public transport is adequate infrastructure needs to be improved
- Road layout improvements Rhondda Fach
- Improving road infrastructure and transport will help improve areas in deprivation
- Connections to the M4 should be improved
- Infrastructure connecting to the wider region outside of Cardiff
- It is important to identify opportunities and enhancements to transport infrastructure that can be brought forward by new development
- the RLDP should include limitations and consider heavy usage of existing roads
- Accessible walking routes for disabled people
- Facilities available within walking distance
- new roads should include active travel provision
- Facilitating and encouraging development around South Wales Metro locations
- Extension of the Metro to North parts of RCT
- Lack of parking facilities in some areas
- Congestion in Tonyrefail


*Economy and Employment Issues:*

- Delivery of employment land must not sterilise mineral resources or infrastructure
- Major new employment site proposals should be accompanied by appropriate resource assessments and supply chain considerations
- Businesses finding it difficult to expand due to a lack of land
- Business parks should be set within a green environment
- Existing industrial estates should be better managed
- Good quality housing to encourage employees to live in the Borough close to work

- Road infrastructure accessing valley communities is a challenge to accessing employment
- Fair access to job market as many are travelling long distances to other areas for work
- Council should be encouraging companies to set up in the valleys
- Encourage businesses to invest in the area to employ skilled labour
- More entry level jobs need to be created
- Social value contracts as part of awarding building and development contracts
- Manufacturing sector in the valleys should be expanded creating jobs for local people
- Employment should be based as locally as possible
- Lack of employment opportunities in RCT
- Encouraging green jobs
- There should be a strategy to bring significant employers to the area
- Investment should be focused on one area/town centre as this will encourage others to follow, benefits will reach other areas
- Providing spaces for local non-profits and other organisations in areas where economy and employment are areas of concern
- Self-employed and local entrepreneurs needs support
- The development and provision of starter business units
- Encourage business set up with subsidies and advice centres
- More businesses should be encouraged in town centres, with incentives such as reductions in business rates
- Working hubs should be created in town centres
- Encourage remote working and set up public office hubs so people can travel short distances

*Health and well-being issues:*

- Encourage group physical activity by holding events in parks and open spaces
- Better signs, paths, advertising of walking routes
- Walking groups facilitated by the council
- Ensure adequate access to green space
- Current pathways need to be improved
- Develop existing outdoor facilities, cycle tracks, bodies of water for sports
- Tree planting scheme should be developed and planting increased
- Active travel improvements and creation as part of development
- Coastal path could be used for RCT, an RCT path to link up all areas
- Greater emphasis on local environments post-covid
- Outdoor leisure that is accessible for all
- Flooding, pollution and climate change are all potential health issues
- There are not enough GP surgeries, and this is a constraint on development
- Health board should identify where healthcare provisions need to be located

- New development should be encouraged to deliver health facilities, active travel, GI
- Health centres need to be accessible
- Mental health support
- The number of fast-food outlets is a problem and adds to the health issues in the area
- More education on nutrition is needed
- Air quality is an issues and speed limits should be lowered
- Heavy traffic causes pollution and this is linked to lack of sustainable transport
- Tree planting for air pollution

*Environment Issues:*

- Development should not be to the detriment of environment
- GI must be a requirement of new development
- Green spaces should be created within new housing development
- Greenspace is an opportunity to build on and maintaining existing biodiversity
- Biodiversity enhancements must be delivered
- Focus on rewilding and nature highways
- Local environmental designations within the borough must be based on a robust and transparent assessment of their biodiversity credentials
- Tee planting schemes
- Utilising the natural environment to create jobs, well-being projects
- Grass cutting should be limited
- Rubbish on open and green spaces is an issue
- Increased protection for green spaces
- Reduction of biocides by agriculture
- Peat bog restoration
- Promoting green and blue spaces and ensuring access
- Joined up thinking with partners such as NRW
- Roads should have some prevention or assistance for wildlife trying to cross to reach their habitats
- Lack of green/ open space in Tonyrefail.

*Climate Change Issues:*

- There should be strategic drainage solutions to prevent flooding
- The safety of coal tips that are impacted by flooding and storms
- The flood risk throughout RCT needs to be considered
- Flooding is caused by culverts in RCT and maintenance is required
- Renewable energy and district heating should be considered and encouraged
- New developments should include solar panels and living roofs
- Local food growing projects should be encouraged
- More education is needed on reusing and recycling

- Developments need to be adaptable to climate change in the future
- Land management to support ecological resilience and mitigate impact of climate change
- Housing stock provides a challenge to climate change issues, EV charging, pollution
- Motorised transport should be discouraged

## *Waste Issues:*

- There should be an emphasis on less waste at source such as packaging
- Cash back recycling projects would encourage more recycling
- Education is required on reusing and recycling
- Increase the circular economy
- More bins are needed to dispose of litter
- Fly tipping is becoming a problem

## *Minerals Issues:*

- Historic tips should have land reclamation projects to make them useable again
- Historic coal tips need to be monitored for safety
- Mineral safeguarding zones should be revisited
- Wildlife and ecology has to be prioritised over minerals
- No extensions of quarries should be included in the RLDP

## *Culture and Heritage Issues:*

- Promote culture, heritage and welsh language to encourage visitors
- Local tourism should be encouraged
- Historic buildings that can't be made zero carbon should be allowed to be demolished
- There should be more encouragement to learn Welsh
- Welsh language school provision needs to be improved
- Underrepresented groups in arts and culture to be supported
- Cultural activities to be included into RLDP at all levels
- Theatre and performing arts underfunded

## *Community Infrastructure Issues:*

- Council to promote and fund community facilities
- Access to healthcare, schools, cultural services, green space and jobs should all be improved
- Community hubs should be provided

- Improvements to post 16 education, apprenticeships and other forms of training
- Tonyrefail lacks sufficient services and facilities

*Tourism and Leisure Issues:*

- Promote RCT as a tourist destination
- Facilities at tourism attractions need to be improved
- Local historic buildings could be turned into attractions
- Sports and leisure clubs should be advertised more
- Green tourism should be focused on to promote the natural environment
- Better access to tourism facilities for disabled people
- Transport access to tourism destinations needs to be improved
- Focus on the leisure, hospitality and tourism economy to provide jobs and business opportunities
- Signed walking routes should be implemented to improve access

*Town Centre and Retail Issues:*

- Small businesses should share larger retail units
- Lower rental rates would encourage businesses
- Land allocated for retail should be built on within a time period, if not consider community use
- Digitising the high street with apps for shops
- Empty shops should be brought back into use for community use
- Free parking or low-cost parking to encourage people to visit
- Pedestrianisation of town centres for safety
- Good transport and access would boost small businesses
- Investment in town centres and smaller village centres
- Investment in other town centres outside of Pontypridd, Aberdare, Treorchy
- Anti-social behaviour in town centres during the day
- Retail centres across valley competing with those in North RCT
- Two town centres in Cynon Valley (competing)
- Aberdare to be treated as a retail park, including leisure facilities, hospitality
- Build on the success of Treorchy and consider replication elsewhere in RCT
- There are too many retail units outside of town centres
- Town centres need investment and updating to meet the needs of 21st century
- Flexible development management policies allow changes of use in town centres including residential
- Town centre boundaries should be reviewed in the RLDP
- Lots of takeaways and fast-food outlets generate litter
- As retail becomes under pressure, community, cultural and leisure uses become increasingly important in support town centre vitality
- 20 minute towns, people access facilities and services within walking distance

- Town centres need to act as hubs and local centres

*Coal Legacy Issues:*

- The environmental regeneration of these areas should be considered
- Coal tips could be reclaimed for leisure uses
- Inquiry into safety of coal tips and ensure coal authority are held accountable
- Fines should be handed out if contaminated land is not dealt with
- Problems with subsidence under houses and programme of rectification
- Clear strategy on managing this legacy to mitigate uncertainty
- Monitoring of tip stability and reported openly for local communities
- Residents need reassurance that tips are safe and need to see remedial action is being taken
- Up to date maps of former underground workings are available and digitised
- Council needs to be part of an insurance solution for houses flooding by old mining tips
- These sites possess the potential for geo-thermal energy and this should be explored
- Brownfield sites converted to housing and amenities rather than further polluting uses
- Remediation works can have an impact on viability of housing sites
- The legacy could be used for cultural and historical attractions

*Other Issues:*

- Energy is an issue not directly addressed and it should be considered
- Disability exclusion and lack of access is an issue
- Areas in south of the County Borough feel disjointed and need investment
- Crime is an issue throughout RCT
- Safety and welfare of younger generation
- Involvement and feedback from local communities on development projects

# Findings from the public direct mail questionnaire 2021

*Housing Issues:*

- Ensure developers deliver the maximum target for affordable housing
- The Revised LDP must provide the tools to stimulate the right growth, and not just control the wrong
- More new homes are clearly required
- The failure of the current LDP to deliver what is proposed should not be used as evidence that there is not or that there is no interest from developers to build in RCT or from people to live there
- Economic uncertainty or rapidly fluctuating household projections should also not result in figures that discourage proposals

- Proposals must be in the right place, on the right sites and be of the right form and content
- Proposals should ideally address multiple well-being objectives, crossing environmental, social and economic topics
- To respond positively to housing issues, the LDP needs to concentrate on five main tasks:
  a) Establishing an appropriate housing requirement and breaking this down into types and tenures – including a split between market and affordable provision
  b) Identifying and prioritising the places (settlements or corridors) that new homes should be directed to and explain why they have been selected: with a focus on geography, accessibility (and active travel), self-containment and capacity
  c) Setting key tests for sites to meet – with sequence and deliverability as well as "first base" accessibility factors
  d) Asking promoters for details of their schemes – so there can be certainty about content, design and environmental quality and scheme delivery
  e) Scoring total performance – with attention given to proposals or locations which have the potential to tackle or improve existing issues (rather than just to avoid adding to them)

*Transport Infrastructure Issues:*

- Ensure new roads are in place early on should they be required by new developments
- Development in Llanharan is problematic, current construction is causing major problems on the A473 and surrounding roads
- Wider issues with infill sites and transport, some developments create pinch points with traffic and this does not appear to be taken into consideration in proposals
- Work closely with public transport providers to ensure adequate provision for the increasing population
- Ensure adequate Active Travel provision to reduce car use
- Active Travel routes should include bridleways, not just cycleways and pedestrian routes
- The shift in travel patterns, together with planned improvements to the regional transport network should adjust the way the Revised LDP approaches transport and movement as a whole
- The approach should be bi-focal and focus on what can be done now and in the foreseeable future to reduce demand for travel, and to make any necessary trips as short and as sustainable as possible
- This approach has implications for the location of development and underscores the need for sites to address existing issues and the potential for new schemes to improve current conditions
- Transport and movement should be key criteria in identifying the general locations for additional growth

- The focus needs to be on opportunities to make things better for the surrounding areas as well as for those living or working in the new spaces provided
- Scope for easy and significant peak hour wins should be prioritised, for example, reducing commuter trips and ensuring school travel is sustainable

*Economy and Employment Issues:*

- The ways in which people work has changed, and the Revised LDP can help support this by promoting hybrid models of working in places that can sustain and benefit from them
- Emphasis needs to be given to the economic and digital infrastructure that is needed
- Nearby and conventional employment opportunities should be an important consideration in general decisions on the location of new development
- The Revised LDP should plan positively for the economic progress that is needed to meet national and local well-being objectives
- Planning should be coordinated so that wider aspirations for low carbon but higher value economic activity are prioritised, targets for home working are achieved
- The Revised LDP could place carbon targets into policy or using them to assess the potential and performance of sites and schemes
- Special attention should be given to schemes that can build on existing employment provisions to stimulate new local enterprise and modernise existing patterns of work

*Health and Well-being Issues:*

- Protect all allotment sites from development
- Ensure that adequate local health facilities are included at early stages of housing developments
- Health and well-being is a theme that should run through the Revised LDP and its vision/strategy
- One of the key measures of strategy, location and site selection should be the ability of sites and schemes to deliver conditions for healthy living, learning, working and playing

*Natural Environment Issues:*

- All current SSSIs, SINCs and Local Nature Reserves should be protected from development and encroachment
- Planning conditions related to the natural environment should be monitored and enforced by Planning and the Ecologist
- Fungi is important for the ecosystem and are key players in carbon and nitrogen dynamics

- Fungi and their habitats must be protected, this is important when designing strategies to improve, maintain or protect green spaces
- Fungi should be given a much higher profile in planning matters and this ties in with the WBFG Act
- We must think about habitats from the ground up, starting with microbes that support those habitats
- There should be a need for fungal surveys by competent mycologists to be included as early as possible in the planning process
- Designate further sites as SINCs and other designations
- Encourage Town/Community Councils and local community groups to become involved in RCT Action for Nature
- Measured approach to natural environment, and there should be more of it or it should be of a higher quality at the end of the plan period
- This could be implemented by the protection and enhancement of existing features, or by the provision of new and better green infrastructure within new development
- Some areas will not be suitable for growth due to the value of existing biodiversity
- At the site level, sufficient details should be provided to show how there can be net gain from proposals

### *Climate Change Issues:*

- This is a critical issue for the new LDP
- The ability of new schemes to achieve improvements and demonstrate what can be achieved, should be at the heart of strategy, policies and allocations
- Extra credit should be given to sites and schemes that are able to tackle current problems and issues
- Site selection criteria should prioritise the right forms of growth and infrastructure
- Revised LDP could set out what it expects new development to achieve
- A focus on homes, transport and energy may be appropriate

### *Waste Issues:*

- Encourage more recycling to further reduce waste going to landfill and incineration
- Provide more resources to ensure unlicensed tipping is not carried out
- Garden waste tipping in green spaces has the potential to spread invasive non-native plant species
- The Revised LDP needs to use the reduce, reuse and recycle hierarchy during construction and operation of spaces and activities so both generate as little waste as possible

### *Minerals Issues:*

- There is a clear preference for necessary extraction to take place within existing quarries where this is possible, acceptable and economic
- The Revised LDP presents an opportunity to consider the future of existing quarries that are at or coming to the end of their lives
- There is the potential to make very effective use of some former mineral sites

### *Culture, Heritage and Welsh Language Issues:*

- Enhancing this should be an important priority
- The Revised LDP should consider development proposals within a context that looks for wider community benefit and integration between what is proposed and what exists
- Schemes should seek input from and reflect the needs of the local community in relation to the Welsh language
- The Revised LDP should respond positively to heritage by minimising impact in site selection and maximising potential
- Proposals should aim to add to heritage or create new assets where this is possible and encourage public access to them

### *Community Infrastructure Issues:*

- Making sure that an area has access to quality community facilities will be important
- Provision of new and better community infrastructure will be an important issue for the Revised LDP to address
- Ability of schemes to help increase the quantity and quality of local facilities should be an important measure of success
- Timing will be important so that current and historic concerns about delivery can be openly and positively addressed from the start of site selection

### *Tourism and Leisure Issues:*

- Continued support for initiatives such as Valleys Regional Parks
- Provide printed information for visitors to hotels, B&Bs, pubs and local libraries
- Provide more resources to Rights of Way department for maintenance of PROWs, including adequate signage
- Sites and schemes can add to local opportunities for tourism and leisure and some will have better potential to do this
- Ability of schemes to add to local leisure and tourism should feature in site scoring

### *Town Centres and Retail Issues:*

- Ability of residents and employees to shop locally or nearby will help foster community spirit, support local business and limit travel demand
- Existing and future potential to do this should feature in decisions about growth locations and site selection

*Other Issues:*

- Replacing the existing plan with a compact strategy and a modern set of policies and proposals that apply the key messages from national guidance and best practice is a better and more appropriate ambition

# Appendix 9 – Community Councils

*Housing Issues*

- RLDP needs to adjust downward the housing formation, noting the revised household projections from Welsh Government and housing growth in North West Cardiff will meet a significant part of new demand in RCT
- Housing. More is required whilst accepting the limited sites available (Lady Windsor is, we believe, largely in the flood plain) initiatives to bring back into use derelict houses. This could also tie in with enhanced training & education opportunities.

*Affordable Housing Issues*

- Insufficient level of social and affordable housing in RCT
- Increase the minimum affordable housing requirement on new housing developments
- Appraisal of existing vacant housing stock
- Existing housing stock could be revamped with grants
- Only a small proportion of the houses built during the plan period have been affordable
- Increase supply of high quality social housing for rent, including Council housing

*Transport Infrastructure Issues:*

- Active Travel should be encouraged
- Many existing cycle paths contain gaps and this does not encourage use
- The 15 year plan for Active Travel should be included in the RLDP to join existing gaps
- Education programme in schools to encourage cycling
- Schools should be provided with funding to accommodate an increase in cycle use

- Lack of capacity on current public transport infrastructure
- Increase the frequency of trains stopping on the mainline through Pontyclun
- There needs to be a clear direction of travel regarding transport. This should include a railway holt at Ynysybwl to improve numbers using rail as their main transport system. Bus links need to be enhanced to ensure residents can get to their places of employment, dentists & shops. Links need to be improved across valleys, not just down to Cardiff.

### *Economy and Employment Issues:*

- More town centres in RCT need investment and this should be concentrated on encouraging local businesses and services, creating more jobs
- Discourage franchises and chain stores in high streets
- Encourage home-grown businesses
- Reduce business rates
- Work closely with Chambers of Commerce
- Potential to grow in smaller towns outside of the city centre
- Covid provides the opportunity to adjust spatial balance of South Wales
- Provide necessary infrastructure to allow firms to invest in a balanced way throughout South Wales

### *Health and Well-being Issues:*

- Participation in activities is a strategic issue relating to health and well-being that the RLDP should seek to address
- Local groups would benefit from more strategic funding to support on-going work
- Create a team within the Council to work with local groups, to help organise events, gain funding and acknowledge the work they do
- Work more closely with Community Councils
- RLDP that builds on community engagement, place planning and integrates across the economic region is necessary for health and well-being
- Whilst not necessarily part of the LDP there is a need for more GP surgeries.

### *Natural Environment and Climate Change:*

- Climate change is a strategic issue relating to the environment that the RLDP should address
- Lack of EV charging facilities across the County Borough and Wales
- Increase the number of EV charging points throughout RCT, particularly country parks, sports venues
- Could local and national grants be awarded to landowners to provide EV charging points
- All new housing and businesses should have a requirement to provide EV charging facilities

- Access to good quality green spaces for each community
- Accountability for sustainable management should be made clear
- Funded tree planting programme that operates on Council owned land
- Minimum targets should be set to plant large numbers of native trees
- Charitable sector could work with RCT to expand existing work
- Involving schools will help children get involved in solutions
- RLDP is essential to controlling Climate Change and should reduce unnecessary travel, promote sustainable transport and high quality, low energy housing, avoid development in flood zones and require development that is integrated with renewable energy capacity

*Waste:*

- Fly tipping
- Higher penalties for fly tipping
- Periodic provision of skips in residential areas so households can dispose of waste
- The RLDP should reduce waste, provide for the re-use and recycling of waste
- RLDP needs to make provision to work with businesses to reduce waste and create an increased capacity for local re-use of recyclable material

*Minerals:*

- RLDP should provide for the extraction of minerals as necessary for the development of communities and infrastructure
- RLDP needs to improve HGV movements to and from the quarry at Talygarn

*Culture, Heritage and Welsh Language:*

- Celebrate Welsh heritage
- Encourage and support events that help communities understand their heritage and look to the future
- Development and promotion of local heritage and culture is essential for well-being and tourism
- RLDP needs to promote the use of Welsh language through education and culture

*Community Infrastructure:*

- New or expansion of education development should have community and the environment at its heart
- Community hubs can encourage local communities to thrive
- Sustainable local communities need planned access to local facilities such as health, social care and education
- Community infrastructure development has not taken place
- RLDP must contain irreversible commitment to ensure community infrastructure is delivered

*Tourism and Leisure:*

- Walking landscape
- Build on the momentum of people exploring their local area during covid
- Outdoor activity ventures should be encouraged
- Localised tourism and leisure is essential for the RLDP
- RCT needs to recognise potential for a visitor destinations and plan for the realisation of those opportunities
- RLDP needs to provide the infrastructure to support tourism
- To support tourism footpaths need to be maintained and increased with better signage and interpretation.  This should include areas adjacent to routes such as the Taff Trail.

### *Town Centres and Retail:*

- Strategic theme of RLDP needs to be deconcentration
- Re-localise and investment in smaller towns rather than large scale retail centres
- RLDP should identify Pontyclun as a principal town

### *Coal Mining Legacy:*

- Housing development should be encouraged on industrial brownfield sites
- Existing greenfield sites should no longer be considered for further development
- No area with rich biodiversity should be considered for development
- Build on the coal mining legacy to re-purpose and re-shape communities for the future

Tonyrefail Community Council Specific 2023 Lets Talk Consultation (due to numbers of responses)

- Sustainable development should be prioritised as part of the LDP.
- The LDP should prioritise the supply of social housing, affordable housing, sheltered / supported housing and independent living units for the elderly.
- There is lack of development of housing in the rental sector.
- In the identification of residential development sites, consideration should be given, in the first instance, to the conversion of disused / derelict retail and industrial sites within the settlement boundary, as well as other brownfield sites within the district.
- With an ageing population and an increasing number of elderly residents living alone in family-sized dwellings, the LDP should look to address this underutilised capacity through the prioritisation of sheltered accommodation and/or smaller bungalows in supported complexes.
- It is crucial the LDP seeks to protect SSSIs from the adverse effects of future development. The LDP should make provision for effective green belt buffer

zones. This would include the creation of green corridors to link the individual sites together allowing the flora and fauna to spread and thrive, potentially making use of existing areas already identified as Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation. Such connectivity plays a critical role in the resilience of an ecosystem.

- The LDP needs to identify further green spaces to be set aside for the benefit of social and environmental wellbeing of the area's residents and visitors.
- The revised LDP must ensure accurate information on the existence of all Public Rights of Way including footpaths and bridleways. The poorly maintained condition of many ancient routes throughout the Tonyrefail district encourages the loss of these routes as viable pathways. Landowners and developers have been known to block off access to public footpaths and bridleways that, over time, become permanent features.
- the preservation of historic buildings, landmarks, places of cultural interest and significant landscapes is essential to ensure the cultural identity of the area is maintained. The Council requests the LDP looks to include a comprehensive record of such assets for protection.
- Lack of infrastructure and provision of services to support the growing number of residents. With an increase in the population, health services have not kept up with this growth.
- Critical infrastructure that is currently straining to support the rapid increase in residential development, such as drainage and sewerage systems, schools and roads, must be earmarked for prioritisation prior to any significant new development in the area.
- There needs to be more enforcement of the LDP or it will be an ineffective tool

## Appendix 10 - Issues from the Integrated Sustainability Appraisal

Analysis of the baseline information has enabled a set of key sustainability issues facing RCT to be identified. Identification of the key sustainability issues and consideration of how these issues might develop over time if the Revised LDP is not implemented. The key sustainability issues that were identified in the SA for the adopted LDP have been reviewed and revised in light of the updated baseline information. Revisions were also made to ensure that the key issues are in fact key sustainability issues or problems, and not observations of positive sustainability trends. The full information on the ISA issues can be seen in full in the ISA Scoping report. The updated set of key sustainability issues for RCT is presented below:

- High levels of carbon dioxide emissions from transport.
- The need to protect and enhance designated and undesignated biodiversity features, particularly in line of the nature emergency that has been declared at the national level.
- The need to protect and enhance the sensitive landscape, particularly around the Brecon Beacons National Park.

- Pockets of poor air quality, in particular where numerous AQMAs have been declared, which can have adverse effects on the natural environment and human health. These areas of poor air quality reflect the high volume of traffic that regularly passes through the County Borough.
- Recent increases in drug-related crime.
- Relatively high levels of health-related deprivation in relation to the national average, with more people experiencing bad or very bad health and a smaller proportion experiencing good or very good health.
- Poor levels of educational attainment (almost a third of RCT's population have no formal qualifications).
- A high proportion of terraced housing and the need to achieve a better mix of housing types within new developments, including adaptable new homes to the needs of older people and people with reduced mobility.
- Relatively high levels of unemployment and economic inactivity compared to Wales and the rest of the UK, combined with the current cost of living crisis and the likely entry of the UK economy into formal recession.
- Lower levels of Welsh language speaking than the national average.
- The County Borough has one of the highest recycling rates in Wales. However, there is a need to maintain and improve the current levels, particularly in light of current climate emergency.
- Decline in manufacturing sector and the need to diversify into other areas including tourism.
- There are areas of higher flood risk generally located around the main watercourses in the plan area. This includes areas within some of the main settlements. Climate change is likely to have an adverse effect in relation to the frequency and severity of flooding events, such as those from recent high magnitude storms Ciara and Denis, which significantly impacted RCT. Climate change will also likely have an adverse effect in relation to flooding events from sources of local flooding, such as flooding from surface water, ground water and small rivers, ditches and streams.
- There are a number of waterbodies in the plan that are in poor ecological condition and some that are failing in relation to their chemical status.
- The majority of WwTWs in RCT have capacity to accommodate new development. However, Cynon WwTW is noted to have very limited capacity and Hirwaun WwTW has limited capacity. New consumptive abstraction regarding the River Taff, from its flow into Cardiff Bay, and tributary river catchments Rhondda Fawr and Rhondda Fach, will only be available at medium to high river flows.