



Dear Leader,

I write to you following our recent meeting regarding the Valleys Task & Finish Group and its Valleys Action Plan.

I am very pleased to inform you that the group has now completed its task of compiling a valleys action plan, which was duly approved at the last meeting on the 1st June.

In addition to the work on the Action Plan we delivered other functions such as initially responding to the Welsh Government Consultation "Our Valleys, Our Future"; overseeing the development of valley-specific reports, written by Councillors to inform future discussions on specific valley needs; and acting as a voice for valley communities at Welsh Government ministerial engagement events.

I hope you will agree with our feelings that we have fully discharged our responsibilities under the Terms of Reference set out for the group at its inception.

I attach the most recent and final version of the Valleys Action Plan as the outcome of our Valleys Task and Finish Group. As you will appreciate, the plan will need to be a working document, updated and amended as objectives are achieved and priorities are met.

If agreeable to yourself I would like to present the action plan to a future meeting of Cabinet.

The Valleys Task and Finish group concludes that its task has been delivered and therefore it is right and proper that it finishes its business under its current terms. However, we feel there is merit in continuing the structure of a Valleys Briefing Group as a consultative body able to meet as and when required. We feel the future scrutiny of the Valleys Action Plan can take place under the current scrutiny process via structures such as the Cabinet Scrutiny Committee and Regeneration and Sustainable Development Scrutiny Committee, and we hope you will agree to that approach going forward.

Thank you once again for demonstrating your commitment to our valleys by establishing the Task and Finish Group, and personally, for giving me the opportunity to chair the meetings and take an active role in shaping how our council will work to support valley communities long into the future.

Yours truly,
Dean

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Croesewir gohebiaeth yn y Gymraeg a byddwn yn ymdrin â gohebiaeth Gymraeg a Saesneg i'r un safonau ac amserlenni.
We welcome correspondence in Welsh and will deal with Welsh and English correspondence to the same standards and timescales.

Key Priorities	Issues	Aims	Objectives	Actions	Opportunities/Community Locations
1. Access to Provision and Services as needed across and within Valley Communities	1.1 Communities with very limited or no public transport.	Improve transport services	Provide demand-responsive transport services	<p>Explore opportunities for expansion of community transport options, e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing routes where uptake of service merits expansion, Development of demand-responsive services (community cars/buses) <p>Ensure all Valley residents have opportunities to access the Hub in Neath.</p>	<p>Extension of Cycle Path in Amman Valley.</p> <p>DANSA (Dulais, Afan, Neath, Swansea Amman Valleys Integrated Community Transport) Feasibility Study</p>
	1.2 Lack of GP and other health social care provision in local communities e.g. accessible out of hours pharmacy, accessible mental health support, dementia support and services to combat isolation/loneliness.	Improve and increase provision of accessible health and social care services	Develop cross-valley services	<p>Feasibility study (possibly with NPTC) around expanding options for public transport linked to provision of school/college transport services.</p> <p>Develop existing Valley mineral lines for passenger transport.</p>	<p>NPTC may consider links?</p> <p>Dulais Valley, Neath and Amman Valley mineral rail lines</p> <p>RDP Feasibility Study</p>
			Improved sufficiency of clinical services	<p>Work with ABMU/PSB partners to develop proposals to improve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Join up on mental health services GP access Access to out of hours pharmacy services Access to drop in services e.g. physiotherapy through provision of outreach 	

	<p>Lack of Medical Staff and access to services/pharmacies in Amman Valley (Amman Tawe Partnership)</p> <p>Lack of day services and support for residents of sheltered housing complex.</p>		<p>Improved transport to health</p> <p>Improved provision of health/care facilities and services in valley communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve cross-border service access where appropriate. <p>Development of demand – responsive services (community cars/buses)</p> <p>Use Local Area Coordinators (LAC) to support mapping of community service provision, identifying existing services and gaps.</p>	<p>Link in with Asset based approach policy</p> <p>Link with Community Services Directory Developments.</p>
<p>Lack of ability in recruiting Doctors and Nurses to the Dulais Valley Primary Care Centre</p>	<p>Requirement for replacement premises for Blaengwrach (Health)</p>		<p>Sustainable Community Anchor Organisations¹</p>	<p>Identify Community Anchor Organisations (CAO) within valley areas.</p> <p>Consider options for provision of sufficient resource to enable CAOs to be effective in local,</p>	<p>Link to review of 3rd Sector funding scheme</p> <p>Explore potential of Renewables Community Benefit Funds to support</p>
<p>1.3 Funding cuts resulting in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decrease in provision likely to pre-empt anti-social behavior 		<p>Improve support to enable sustainability of voluntary sector organisations.</p>			

¹ A community anchor is: independent and community-led; a multi-purpose facility; there for the long term, not a quick fix; a driving force in community renewal. www.dtawales.org.uk/community-anchors/

	<p>e.g. youth clubs, adult learning, leisure activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing reliance on voluntary and third sector led service provision but lack of capacity/resources to enable provision. Decreased provision of childcare for working parents and those requiring support with additional needs Infrastructure for sport and leisure 	<p>Explore 3G pitches linked to the development of the school estate.</p>	<p>Improved Youth provision in communities</p> <p>Accessible Childcare services</p>	<p>development of services and economic regeneration.</p> <p>Map existing youth provision of all types in valley communities. Work with LAC & CAO to develop services.</p> <p>Undertake an assessment of available childcare services in Valley Communities. Identify opportunities to increase provision, working with CAO and LACs.</p>	<p>Community Anchor Organisations</p> <p>Opportunities to link into 30 hour childcare pilot provision in Valley Communities</p> <p>Link to Childcare Sufficiency Study and rollout of WG childcare offer.</p>
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	Locations
<p>2. Employment opportunities</p>	
<p>2.1 Communities with very limited or no public transport.</p>	<p>Explore opportunities for expansion of community transport options identified under 1.1</p>
<p>2.2 Existing industrial estates 100% occupation, more start up units, business support and larger units to enable business growth within valley communities</p>	<p>Identify suitable valleys based sites</p> <p>Possible sites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Road, Taigrwaith (Washery site) • Crynant • Glynneath and Cwmgwrach- • Caravan Park at Lamb and Flag • Cwmgors Industrial Site • Ystalyfera: Glan Rhyd and Gurnos
<p>2.3 Lack of employment opportunities, funded skills training, trainee and apprenticeship opportunities within valleys communities. Issues relating to:</p>	<p>Consider planning for all types of industrial, leisure and retail use.</p> <p>Tourism opportunities and service options need space. E.g. Gym, upcycling workshop mentioned.</p> <p>Bicycle repair business opportunity in the Amman Valley</p> <p>Food co-op in the Amman Valley</p> <p>Renewable Energy</p>
<p>Provide demand-responsive transport services</p>	<p>Enable provision of new industrial units</p>
<p>Improve transport services</p>	<p>Increase in unit availability for manufacturing and service industry provision</p>
<p>Open up new employment opportunities in service sector</p>	<p>Support for development of Social enterprise models provided to promote employment and provide in work training.</p>
<p>Increase in local employment opportunities</p> <p>Ensure business support is available for not-</p>	<p>Identify appropriate opportunities for piloting social enterprise solutions</p> <p>Consider Social Enterprise Strategy</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large scale contracts out for tender work against local firm engagement • Lack of awareness of social enterprise possibilities. • Foundational Economy; Council's own employment/service delivery to promote local and sustainable employment. 	for profit enterprises	<p>Procurement rules include community benefit clauses and promote level playing field for community-based providers/suppliers.</p> <p>Community Anchor Organisations being helped to develop and sustain access to adult education.</p> <p>Increased recruitment of for in community workforce within Social Care</p>	<p>Work with relevant agencies to identify appropriate models of good practice</p> <p>Review existing procurement processes</p> <p>Promote accessible childcare and adult social care training in valley communities</p> <p>Focused recruitment of Personal Assistants to meet local needs in valleys.</p>	<p>Consider progress to appropriate Committee in 12 months?</p> <p>Opportunities to work with CAOs and LACs – good link in with Asset Based Provision strategy.</p>
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Key Priorities	Issues	Aims	Objectives	Actions	Opportunities/Community Locations
3. Community Regeneration	<p>3.1 Low community morale within valley communities and perception both by those external and within of marginalization and disadvantage. Services and resources focused on population centres outside valley areas.</p> <p>Ystalyfera; impact on the image of Ystalyfera following the landslide.</p>	<p>Improve social capital² across valley communities</p> <p>Promote a positive and balanced image of area.</p>	Develop community Infrastructure around wellbeing, leisure and tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable digital inclusion through improved access to IT and training provision • Promote and support leisure and tourism infrastructure development (accommodation, walking/cycling/bridle paths, attractions etc.) • Support training and development towards active tourism community enterprises e.g. cycle hire, cafes, sporting/interest activities etc. • Support growth of Welsh Language use 	<p>Linking with training providers and CAOs</p> <p>Link to the PSB priority</p> <p>Planning re leisure and tourism facilities – opening cycling routes to bridleway</p> <p>Afan Park development opportunities</p> <p>Link to the Valleys Landscape Park</p> <p>Link to Welsh Language Promotion Strategy</p> <p>Explore Pontardawe Arts Centre and Cefn Coed Colliery Museum</p> <p>Explore Ysgol y Glyn site in Lower Brynamman, Banwen.</p> <p>Explore opportunities around the Wales</p>

² <https://www.oecd.org/insights/37966934.pdf> the links, shared values and understandings in society that enable individuals and groups to trust each other and so work together.

					<p>Infrastructure Investment Plan and Valleys Tech Programme</p> <p>Link with proposed new Tourism Unit</p>
			<p>Promote activities and provision in Valley communities</p>	<p>Further Develop promotional videos, online slide shows around Valleys</p>	<p>Links with community resources direct or through CAO to develop materials for use...</p> <p>Link to Asset Based Community Development Work</p>

<p>3.2 Areas of dereliction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • disused large buildings (churches/clubs/industrial) • Open cast mining and quarry site renovation • Impact of subsidence on community infrastructure. 	<p>Bring unused sites and buildings into productive use</p>	<p>Facilitate renovation or clearance and reuse of derelict buildings</p> <p>Enable community engagement with renovation projects/activity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify vacant buildings and establish ownership – where appropriate use enforcement orders towards improvements. -121 Heol Cae Gurwen -Old School site Waters Street Gwaun Cae Gurwen • Oversee the establishment of a community liaison group working with Celtic Energy on restoration at sites • Identify possible sites and help promote community renewable schemes • Identify vacant sites for self-build projects 	<p>Refurbishment of East Pit site presents opportunities for increased community involvement in future development.</p> <p>Awel Amman Tawe could be used as local expertise.</p> <p>Welsh Government funding possibly available for self-build projects – links to environmentally neutral building projects may be possible. (Old GCG Primary School site on Waters Street, Gwaun Cae Gurwen)</p>
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<p>3.3 Lack of accommodation to meet specific needs.</p>	<p>Increase the amount of suitable housing tenure</p>	<p>Sufficiency of appropriate accommodation within communities including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible options for adults requiring supported or residential care • 1 and 2 bedroom properties • Accessible housing • Rent levels in Tairānua properties in Amman Valley 	<p>Work with Social Housing Providers and other agencies to deliver housing solutions.</p> <p>Onllwyn Road (1&2 bed properties)</p> <p>Affordable housing on the Forge Yard Site (Lower Brynamman)</p>	<p>Explore opportunities to update LDP to maximize planning/house building opportunities</p>
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