

Future Actions in the Valleys

Priority	Action	Reporting Officer	Progress
Transport	Ensure applications are made for funding to implement the Integrated Network Map proposals	Dave Griffiths	<p>During 2018/2019 financial year the Council was awarded a grant of £775k from Welsh Governments Active Travel Fund for three schemes as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fabian Way route improvements – surfacing, drainage improvements and signage. • Neath Canal Towpath - Crown Foods to Briton Ferry – extending the improvements undertaken in 17/18 between Neath and Crown Foods. • Active Travel scheme design. <p>During 2019/2020 financial year the Council has been awarded a grant of £319K from Welsh Governments Active Travel Fund. The funding has been awarded for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pontardawe Active Travel Route (phase 1) Improvements to the active travel route between Pontardawe and Ystalyfera. • Angel Street to Dwr Y Felin Comprehensive School – improvements to the pedestrian link to the footbridge on Bridge Street Neath. • Pre-work – Design, Feasibility & Land Negotiations • Active Travel Route Sign Audit and Design

Priority	Action	Reporting Officer	Progress
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit of Access Control Measures – to determine if barriers are appropriate and are DDA compliant. Barrier removal will be prioritised • Removal/replacement of Access Control Measures (phase 1) – the top ranking barriers will be removed/replaced. • Promotion of schemes, routes and networks, engagement; and monitoring and evaluation.
	Formally endorse the Welsh Government's proposal to develop Joint Passenger Transport arrangements	Dave Griffiths	<p>There consultation on the Welsh Government's White Paper on Improving Public Transport closed on the 27th March 2019. The Council submitted a response to the Consultation.</p> <p>Two Joint Transport Authority (JTA) options were outlined in the consultation document, and there was the opportunity to put forward suggestions on how alternative structures could work.</p>
	Ensure good take up of the youth card by young people resident in valley communities	Dave Griffiths	<p>The Welsh Government youth card is promoted on the Councils web site. It will also be promoted on the interactive screens at Neath, Port Talbot and the Hub at Port Talbot railway station.</p> <p>The age of eligibility for the scheme has recently increased to 21.</p>

Priority	Action	Reporting Officer	Progress
<p>Access to health and well-being services</p>	<p>Issue an invitation to the Director of Primary Care, ABMU Health Board, early 2019, to address elected members on future health service provision for residents of valley communities</p>	<p>Karen Jones</p>	<p>The Chief Executive, Director of Primary Care and the Chair of Swansea Bay University Health Board addressed the Social Care, Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee on 10th June 2019. Thereafter, the Chair and Chief Executive will address Council on an annual basis.</p>
	<p>Bring forward a report on the development of the Safer, Resilient Communities work in Briton Ferry, Melin and Amman Valley areas, making clear recommendations for the further development of the asset based approach</p>	<p>Andrew Jarrett</p>	<p>A leadership group has been formed with chief officer representatives drawn from Public Services Board partners. The leadership group is supported by a Strategic Group, chaired by an officer from the Swansea Bay Health Board which draws together those service managers and stakeholders that can help move this work forward.</p> <p>A Transformation Bid was made through the Regional Partnership Board for financial resources to deliver the work in the two pilot area. This funding will be targeted at building community capacity and at training the public services (including the Third Sector) workforces. It is intended that the benefits of working in an asset-based model will be evaluated prior to scaling the approach up across other areas of the county borough. Community asset mapping has begun and the first phase of a communications and</p>

Priority	Action	Reporting Officer	Progress
			engagement plan has also been developed. Additionally, the workforces operating in the two areas has been assessed and a proposed training plan has been developed. A small number of dedicated posts have been established to support the work in both statutory agencies and in the Third Sector.
	Ensure elected Members have an opportunity to comment on the draft mental health strategy for the county borough before it is formally signed off by the Regional Partnership Board	Andrew Jarrett	The regional Mental Health strategy went to Social Care, Health and Well-being Cabinet Board on 10 th June. After scrutiny it was agreed as a high level document, an update on progress is scheduled to be reported to Scrutiny in six months.
A sustainable voluntary sector	Build on the work done through the revision of the Third Sector Grant Scheme to clarify the Council's approach to community anchor organisations/community hubs, with specific reference to the emerging work on asset-based community development	Karen Jones	The Council has taken decisions for the period 2020-2022 to protect investment to key community anchor organisations and this is reflected in revised grant agreements with those bodies.
	Continue to roll-out the Welsh Government's Childcare Offer, working closely with existing child care providers in the valley communities	Chris Millis	In September 2018 delivery of the scheme was piloted in 14 wards in NPT and by end of January 2019, all other wards in NPT were included in the delivery.

Priority	Action	Reporting Officer	Progress
			<p>There are currently 775 active (approved) applications for the offer – to July 2019. The number of active applications broken down by electoral Ward is attached at page 20*.</p> <p>An analysis of postcode data from applications has highlighted some areas with lower uptake and these will be targeted for additional promotion and engagement over the coming months.</p> <p>A total of £940,507.74 has been paid to childcare providers for 184,859.5 funded childcare hours from September 2018 – May 2019.</p> <p>126 Childcare Providers have registered to provide the Childcare Offer. Of those, 100 are based within NPT.</p> <p><u>Capital Funding</u> NPT has been awarded £4,255,000 in capital funding from the Welsh Government Childcare Offer Capital Grant Programme for 9 projects to develop Childcare throughout Neath Port Talbot with the aim of co-locating childcare with Foundation Phase Nursery. This includes £610,000 for a small grants pot to improve and develop childcare.</p>

Priority	Action	Reporting Officer	Progress
	Complete the review of community benefits fund criteria, explicitly considering whether fund criteria can be modified to allow bids for maintenance/replacement/core costs	Andrew Thomas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any modification to the Guiding Principles that underpin the governance of the Community Benefit Funds must be carried out with the Developer. • The Community Funds generated from Wind, Solar, Biomass and Mineral Deposit are administered through a raft of Developers and there is no 'one size fits all' – sensitive negotiations will need to be had with separate Developers and what is agreed with one may not sit well with another. • The Third Sector Liaison Forum is to investigate Community Funds that yield in excess of £50,000 per annum as Funds that yield less tend not to be worth the pursuit in terms of trying to make wholesale changes to funding criteria. • Some of the Community Funds are not managed by NPTCBC and fall to NPTCVS (Ffynnon Oer) or Pen y Cymoedd Board of Directors (based in Aberdare with 'Vattenfall') or with 'Gamesa' in the Upper Afan Valley. NPTCBC has no jurisdiction on some of the Funds. • The Maes Gwyn Wind Farm Community Fund in Onllwyn and Glynneath does yield in excess of £50,000 per annum and is managed by DELL. This is the only

Priority	Action	Reporting Officer	Progress
			<p>Community Fund that falls into the category that allows further interrogation. Negotiations were held with Company Directors on the 26.02.19.</p> <p>The Company Directors agreed to a pilot study where Glynneath Training Centre in Glynneath and DOVE in Onllwyn benefit from annual core funding valued at £7,500 each. This will be awarded each year for three years, not as a precedent, but more of an experiment. The only caveat or Condition was that the two Organisations give' the sponsors sufficient exposure or PR on literature, letterheads, flyers, promotional material, etc. to recognise the 'Partnership Working' and the true value of the company in the community (they feel that residents do not generally understand that many of the built projects and the activities in those communities owe their existence to the funding that has come off the back of the Maes Gwyn Wind Farm which serves Glynneath and Onllwyn).</p> <p>There will be Monitoring Report produced quarterly for 'Pennant Walters' as part of the Award process and that will form part of the</p>

Priority	Action	Reporting Officer	Progress
			<p>work currently performed with the Maes Gwyn Panellists.</p> <p>This matter was tabled in Voluntary Sector Liaison Forum on 15th April 2019 and was reported to the Glynneath Maes Gwyn Panel on the 22nd May 2019 and the Onllwyn Maes Gwyn Panel on the 12th June 2019.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are caveats associated with modifying Guiding Principles and these need to be fully evaluated before they can be agreed both by the Grant Management Organisation (the GMO/NPTCBC) and the Developer. Legal Advice is being taken to ensure the integrity of the Grant giving process remains and Internal Audit has been contacted to that affect. • The sphere of influence does not extend to all Community Benefit Funds – there is no ‘quick win’ to be had but efforts are being made to relax some of the grant giving criteria that has been in place for 6+years.
	Bring forward proposals for sports facilities as part of the Strategic School Improvement Programme Band B proposals for Cefn Saeson and Pontardawe	Andrew Thomas	The identified Lead officer is unaware of any such schemes and recommends this action is removed from these reports

Priority	Action	Reporting Officer	Progress
Employment and Employment sites	Explore funding opportunities with Welsh Government to develop additional industrial units in valley areas	Simon Brennan	Regular discussions ongoing with Welsh Government colleagues over the development of business units in valley areas. Additional allocation made in the regeneration capital programme to take advantage of potential funding opportunities.
	Continue to encourage Members to engage in the process for reviewing the Local Development Plan	Nicola Pearce	The review of the LDP will commence in January 2020 and is likely to take approximately 4 years to complete. The review will not result in the complete replacement of the LDP, rather it will assess whether the LDP is achieving its policy objectives and if not why not. This may well necessitate us changing some of our policies. This process will begin in January when a Delivery Agreement (DA) will be drawn up. This DA will identify proposed timelines in addition to a community involvement scheme. The DA will need to be considered by Council and/or an appropriate Board prior to submission to the Welsh Government.
	Deliver the Destination Management Plan and create a Destination Marketing Plan to support the work	Simon Brennan	The Tourism Team has secured £93,000 from Visit Wales to deliver a destination marketing campaign which will showcase key product in both the valleys and urban areas in line with Visit Wales Year of Discovery 2020 and Year of the Outdoors 2021. The campaign will form

Priority	Action	Reporting Officer	Progress
			<p>the majority of our destination marketing activity until December 2020.</p> <p>A new destination website for Neath Port Talbot has been commissioned and is currently in the development phase.</p> <p>The new Neath Port Talbot Place Brand has been agreed by Cabinet and plans are now underway to roll out the brand, starting with a staff workshop on 11th July 2019.</p> <p>The planning application for the Vale of Neath Hub at Resolven Canal Car Park has been submitted. Funding of £160,000 has been secured via Visit Wales to deliver a café, refurbished toilet facilities and improvements to landscaping at the site.</p> <p>A series of Sense of Place events have been organised through the Rural Development Plan Funded Tourism Development in Neath Port Talbot project which is delivered by the Tourism Team. The Sense of Place events are aimed widening the knowledge of tourism operators of the rural areas of the county.</p> <p>In late 2019/2020 financial year a new Destination Management Plan will be</p>

Priority	Action	Reporting Officer	Progress
	<p>Ensure the current review of the corporate procurement policy explicitly considers how the Council's expenditure can benefit valley communities, basing the approach on the Bevan Foundation 1 in £1 million model or similar</p>	Craig Griffiths	<p>prepared and a consultation exercise will be undertaken towards the end of 2019/2020 in readiness for launching a new DMP in April 2020.</p> <p>This work is ongoing. To date we have prepared updated versions of our Contract Procedure Rules, which include reference to compliance with Council related policies and procedures, including the Valley Plan, <i>Our Valleys, Our Future</i>. In April Directorate Management teams were asked to consider these before the official sign off process began. The Contract Procedure Rules will be brought to Cabinet in September.</p> <p>We have also included community benefit obligations which will require officers to consider the use of Community Benefits in all contracts over the value of £1,000,000. Once these Contract Procedure Rules are in place, work will commence in earnest on our new procurement strategy for 2019 onwards which will actively consider these issues and how to promote this strategy, our relationship with the voluntary sector and ensure value for money in all our arrangements, whilst at the same time complying with procurement law and practice.</p>

Priority	Action	Reporting Officer	Progress
	Explore the feasibility of a local employment/training offer for valley residents	Sheenagh Rees	This will be considered but may prove difficult due to the low number of jobs that are currently available.
	Identify a suitable model for providing advice to organisations who wish to set-up as social enterprises	Simon Brennan	<p>Deliver a programme of “Business Bootcamps” within our valley communities to support potential new business start-ups and to provide advice guidance and funding to existing valley located businesses is continuing.</p> <p>Support the delivery of youth entrepreneurship activity in partnership with Big Ideas Wales using “home grown” business role models to deliver inspirational sessions with a focus of encouraging young people to convert their ideas into action.</p>
	We will develop a scheme to identify, attract, train and recruit more local people to work in the local care sector within valley communities, piloting the approach initially in the Amman Valley	Andrew Jarrett	<p>Across Neath Port Talbot and Swansea we have driven forward a recruitment campaign to raise the profile of care staff within the whole sector.</p> <p>Alongside this Western Bay Regional Partnership Board commissioned a scoping exercise to develop an alternative to Domiciliary Care. In essence, this was to assess the viability of setting up a Social Enterprise in difficult to reach areas of the market. The exercise found that any direct competition with existing Domiciliary Care</p>

Priority	Action	Reporting Officer	Progress
			agencies was likely to destabilise an already fragile market. However, the finding of the scoping was that there was a benefit in setting up a local 'home help scheme' with local people supporting vulnerable people within their local community. It is now intended to pilot such a scheme in the Amman Valley.
Community Regeneration	<p>Continue to work with the Welsh Government and wider partners to develop a range of propositions for developing jobs and services within valley communities such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Securing a share of the £25 million of capital investment announced in the Welsh Government for the Neath Strategic hubs to link with the priorities of the Ministerial Taskforce for the valleys focused on attracting investment and job creation • Bid for further development of Cefn Coed as part Of 	<p>Simon Brennan</p> <p>Simon Brennan</p>	<p>Regular discussions ongoing with Welsh Government colleagues to develop strategic projects to be funded through the Neath Strategic Hub designation. Funding proposal submitted to Welsh Government for the Neath Town Centre Redevelopment. Applications also being developed to promote the development of the Foundational Economy in the valleys and to promote local procurement. Funding proposal also being developed for a Community Transport pilot project.</p> <p>Allocations made in the South West Wales Regional Regeneration Strategy for Targeted Regeneration Funding for the purchase and</p>

Priority	Action	Reporting Officer	Progress
	<p>the Valleys Landscape Park</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress of work with Friends of Pontardawe Arts Centre and the Arts Council for Wales to secure the future of the venue • Planning application received for the Afan Valley Adventure Park 	<p>Andrew Thomas</p> <p>Nicola Pearce</p>	<p>redevelopment of the Crown Strategic Site and the development of a Transport Hub for Neath.</p> <p>An application for funding amounting to £2.25m has been submitted to Welsh Government to establish Cefn Coed Colliery Museum as one of the Valleys Regional Gateway sites. We are currently awaiting a decision on the application.</p> <p>A business consultant has been appointed to consider the business case for developing a cinema facility at the Arts Centre. Interim feedback was given at a steering group meeting on Tuesday 9th April. A final report is expected at the end of May. Arts Council for Wales funding and Neath Port Talbot capital funding for this project will be dependent on the business case indicating sufficient additional revenue funding to significantly reduce the operating deficit</p> <p>This was an outline planning application for a proposed adventure resort comprising 600 no. lodges/apartments, 100-bed hotel with associated spa, central plaza containing</p>

Priority	Action	Reporting Officer	Progress
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work to restore East Pit – Is there is potential for the site to be used for tourism led regeneration in due 	<p>Nicola Pearce</p>	<p>restaurants, leisure activities and shops, adventure activities and associated buildings (including X-sports, alpine/ski, forest activities and Trax & Trail), restaurants and associated administration and maintenance buildings and parking for approx. 850 cars, plus associated landscaping, drainage and engineering operations including re-profiling of land, boundary treatment, retaining structures, external lighting and CCTV, and diversion of public rights of way (App Ref: P2018/0493). It was reported to Planning Committee on the 19th March 2019 where Members resolved to grant planning permission subject to conditions and upon the signing of a legal agreement. Work will now commence on drawing up the legal agreement and should it be signed by all parties, the permission will be issued. The developers have three years from the grant of outline planning permission to submit their reserved matters (these are the details relating to the outline planning permission).</p> <p>Coaling at East Pit is now complete and the restoration is underway. It is anticipated that restoration will be complete in March 2020. The operators of the site have made a number of approaches to potential tourism led</p>

Priority	Action	Reporting Officer	Progress
	<p>course and the support of Celtic Energy will be needed to progress this</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with RCT Council on the possible reopening of the Rhondda Tunnel • Tourism work progressing within the framework of the agreed Destination Management Plan 2015-2020 and there will be a Destination Management Marketing Plan established to strengthen the work further • Discussions are taking place through the 	<p>Simon Brennan</p>	<p>developers but due to the scale of the restoration required and the fact that up until recently it was a working site, they have had difficulty in explaining/illustrating how a tourism scheme could be delivered on the landscape that was present at the time. It is hoped that as restoration progresses and an appropriate platform for future uses is created, future developers will be attracted to the site.</p> <p>Please see full tourism update on pages 9 - 11</p>

Priority	Action	Reporting Officer	Progress
	<p>Voluntary Sector Liaison Committee to explore the potential for community renewable energy schemes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of the next stage of the business case and planning application for Onllwyn/Nant Helen rail track test facility • Rheola – continued work with Natural Resources Wales (NRW), Welsh Government and private sector to resolve complex land issues and pursue a leisure based development 	<p>Nicola Pearce</p> <p>Nicola Pearce</p>	<p>This is a joint project between Welsh Government, Powys and NPT. Welsh Government are going to be the applicant and given the scale of the project, the Planning Inspectorate will be the determining body as this is a Development of National Significance (DNS). NPT have however agreed to provide both information and professional support at all stages of the process.</p> <p>The Draft Joint Venture Agreement, Project Status Report and supporting information were reported to Cabinet on 8th May.</p> <p>This site is allocated within the LDP for Tourism Led Regeneration. A planning application has also received a resolution to grant permission for such a development subject to the signing of a section 106 agreement. Unfortunately, since that resolution was made the land-owner sold part of the site and it has subsequently been identified that illegal tipping of waste has</p>

Priority	Action	Reporting Officer	Progress
			<p>taken place. This is a matter which is being pursued by NRW against a number of parties who are responsible for illegally tipping material on the site. NPT have been in discussions with the current landowner and a number of potential developers however it is difficult to progress things until further clarity is provided on the legal case and until funds are identified to remediate the impacts of the tipping.</p>
<p>Culture and Inclusion</p>	<p>Provide a regular update to the Cabinet Scrutiny Committee on the progress being made in implementing the Welsh Language Promotional Strategy and the development of the work to address digital inclusion, drawing out the benefits being delivered in valley communities.</p>	<p>Karen Jones</p>	<p>The Welsh Language Promotion Strategy is scheduled to go to Corporate Director's Group and Cabinet Scrutiny in November 2019.</p> <p>A report on work to tackle digital inclusion was presented with the Public Services Board Annual Report to Cabinet and Council in July 2019.</p>
<p>Impact Assessment/Monitoring</p>	<p>Update report templates to make impacts on valley communities clearer in reports</p>	<p>Karen Jones</p>	<p>The report template has been amended and training has been delivered to all report authors. The new template was rolled out during May 2019.</p>
	<p>Identify valley champions in each scrutiny committee</p>	<p>Karen Jones</p>	<p>To be discussed with Scrutiny Chairpersons following the annual meeting of Council.</p>

Building Economic Resilience in the Valleys Project - Update from the Bevan Foundation

The Project Officer for the Building Economic Resilience came into post on 4th March. The initial focus has been to map the project landscape and partners that we will work with over the next two years. A project plan, milestones and monitoring framework have been developed. Much of the work on the concept of resilience has been reviewed and used to develop our own understanding of it and to convey why we believe it is the best framework to use for bringing change to the South Wales valleys. This has taken the form of a concept discussion paper, which has been shortened to a blog on resilience. The Welsh Government's Valleys taskforce has a new Minister leading it and it is now three years since its conception. An analysis of the work of the task force to date has been produced, along with where the project can add most value to it at this juncture and leading into 2021. Closely related to this, the Welsh Government has also opened a fund to develop foundational economy projects, which will be open for bids shortly. To coincide with this, a workshop will take place with partner organisations to help frame any bids that go in to the fund, to look at how they can ensure they contribute towards new ways of building economic resilience and are in line with its key principles.

The partnerships that the Bevan Foundation deliver in the first phase of the project will be on procurement and social business (procurement first as it is suspected it may require more than six months). The second phase partnerships will be on community assets and new financial instruments. Procurement is a particularly crowded discussion area at the moment, and as such the research has proved extensive and remains ongoing. Nonetheless, this could also be advantageous. Welsh national policy and guidance is currently being overhauled and it is likely that government consultation in this field will co-inside with the procurement partnership activity, providing a good opportunity to influence and provide first hand input into government thinking.

In the process of getting out-and-about and making connections, representatives from the Bevan Foundation have attended workshops by Unltd, which are being delivered in the Valleys to current and prospective social entrepreneurs. They have written a blog on social business in the valleys, which can be accessed here: <https://www.bevanfoundation.org/commentary/social-business/>. The project was also quoted recently in the Western Mail in a piece they did on the UK Competitiveness index and in the Merthyr Express on the same topic.

Next steps are to complete the partnerships terms of reference, finalise the make-up and activity of the partnerships on procurement and social business, produce a briefing on procurement, continue meetings with all project partners and potential additional partners, and arrange the first thought leader / seminar of the project.

***Active Childcare Offer Applications by Electoral Ward (as at 19th July 2019)**

Ward	Number of Active Applications
Aberavon	33
Aberdulais	11
Allt-Wen	19
Baglan	45
Blaengwrach	10
Briton Ferry East	18
Briton Ferry West	10
Bryn and Cwmavon	37
Bryn-Coch North	15
Bryn-Coch South	41
Cadoxton	2
Cimla	10
Coedffranc Central	25
Coedffranc North	16
Coedffranc West	48
Crynant	17
Cwmllynfell	4
Cymmer	11
Dyffryn	10
Glyncorrwg	3
Glynneath	18
Godre'r Graig	23
Gwaun-Cae-Gurwen	15

Ward	Number of Active Applications
Gwynfi	7
Lower Brynamman	7
Margam	8
Neath East	26
Neath North	22
Neath South	16
Onllwyn	5
Pelenna	3
Pontardawe	37
Port Talbot	30
Resolven	14
Rhos	5
Sandfields East	28
Sandfields West	27
Seven Sisters	13
Tai-bach	44
Tonna	17
Trebanos	8
Ystalyfera	17
Total	775