

The Vale of Glamorgan Council

Cabinet Meeting: 6 March, 2017

Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Education

Welsh Government National Development Framework Consultation: Call for Evidence and Projects

Purpose of the Report

1. This report has been prepared to advise Cabinet of the Welsh Government's Consultation in respect of the proposed National Development Framework (NDF) for Wales. The consultation calls for evidence and projects which will help inform the NDF and is looking specifically for evidence in respect of the role and scope of the NDF, national issues that could be addressed in the NDF and the NDFs role in shaping regional Strategic Development Plans and local authority Local Development Plans.

Recommendations

1. That Cabinet endorses the report as the Council's formal response to the Welsh Government's consultation and Call for Evidence and Projects on the NDF.
2. That the use of Article 14.14 of the Council's Constitution (urgent decision on procedure) be authorised in respect of the response to Welsh Government's call for evidence.

Reasons for the Recommendations

1. To obtain Cabinet's endorsement of the response submitted to the Welsh Government consultation and Call for Evidence and Projects on the NDF.
2. To ensure a response is sent in respect of the call for evidence prior to the closing date of 7th March 2017.

Background

2. The Planning (Wales) Act 2015 provides a statutory requirement for the Welsh Ministers to produce and keep up-to-date a National Development Framework (NDF), which will replace the current Wales Spatial Plan.
3. The NDF will fulfil a number of roles, including setting out the Welsh Government's land use priorities and providing a national land use framework for Strategic and Local Development Plans.

4. The NDF will concentrate on development and land use issues of national significance which the planning system is able to influence and deliver. The process of approving the NDF will include a statutory twelve week public consultation period and the NDF in line with other development plans will have a fixed time period at the end of which it will cease to have effect as a development plan.
5. In future, the development plan system will comprise the all-Wales NDF, any regional Strategic Development Plans (SDPs) and at the local level Local Development Plans (LDPs). SDPs are unlikely to be prepared across the whole of Wales, meaning that some parts of Wales will have three tiers of development plans and others two.
6. The development planning system will ensure that issues are considered at the most appropriate level. This is an important principle and will ensure that plans deal with those issues that they can best influence. All plans are important and it is the alignment of plans at all levels, working together, that will help achieve national goals.
7. The Planning Directorate of Welsh Government has begun work on the production of a National Development Framework (NDF). The NDF will set out a 20 year land use framework for Wales and will replace the current Wales Spatial Plan.
8. The NDF will:
 - Set out where nationally important growth and infrastructure is needed and how the planning system - nationally, regionally and locally - can deliver it.
 - Provide direction for Strategic and Local Development Plans and support the determination of Developments of National Significance.
 - Sit alongside Planning Policy Wales, which sets out the Welsh Government's planning policies and will continue to provide the context for land use planning.
 - Support national economic, transport, environmental, housing, energy and cultural strategies and ensure they can be delivered through the planning system.
 - Be reviewed every 5 years.
9. The NDF will include spatial planning policies and will identify national projects. The Welsh Government is therefore interested to receive evidence that can help inform the development of the policies and details of projects that can help Wales meet its national goals. The Welsh Government's Call for Evidence and Projects is therefore an opportunity to provide information to inform the NDF. Responses to the Welsh Government consultation on the NDF should be received by the 7th March 2017. As a consequence recommendation 2 seeks the use of the Urgency Procedure to allow comments to be submitted within the timescale.

Relevant Issues and Options

10. Like the Wales Spatial Plan before, the NDF will set out the Welsh Government's land use priorities and provide a national land use framework for Strategic and Local Development Plans. The NDF will include spatial planning policies and will identify nationally significant projects which contribute to the economic, social and environmental enhancement of Wales.
11. While projects promoted and ultimately included within a NDF will be of national significance, they will clearly have local implications which will need to be

addressed and reconciled. It is inevitable that the development of NDF projects will need to be reflected in regional or local policy documents such as LDPs. Such inclusion is invariably reliant upon strong and appropriate evidences bases and NDF projects should therefore be underwritten by appropriate evidence which is available to the local authorities in whose administrative area they fall.

12. Given the significance of the NDF therefore it is imperative that projects which are of direct relevance and impact upon the Vale of Glamorgan and indeed the Cardiff Capital City Region are fully represented and the following projects are considered to warrant submission as a part of the Welsh Government's call for evidence.

Nationally Significant Projects

13. The continued funding and support of the following nationally significant projects are considered to be essential for the continued growth and prosperity of Wales.

Cardiff Capital Region Metro

14. A metro system will bring benefits to passengers, link communities and provide substantial economic benefits to both the region and the rest of Wales. Comprising elements of an electrified rail system; integrated transport hubs; park and ride facilities; new light rail and/or bus rapid transit routes and active travel interventions, a metro will have positive social, economic and environmental effects and help to shape the region's identity and boost the Welsh economy.
15. Objectives, delivery timetables and management responsibilities have already been established and initial funding and delivery phases have been identified and in some cases improvement works have already commenced. The metro is seen as a pivotal project to the emerging Cardiff Capital Region's City Deal proposal which is supported by the ten local authorities in south east Wales. The proposal identifies the South East Wales Metro, including the Valley Lines Electrification programme, as a key priority for investment creating a more economically effective and cohesive region. It is the Council's view that the importance of the scheme to the south east region should also be reflected within a NDF for Wales because of the knock-on wider benefits for the rest of Wales beyond the region.
16. Successful delivery of a south wales metro will contribute to realising all of the Well-being goals in the Welsh Government Well-being and Future Generations Act.

Cardiff Airport

17. As the only major international airport in Wales, the importance of Cardiff Airport to the future development potential of Wales, the Cardiff Capital Region and the Vale of Glamorgan cannot be underestimated.
18. With connections to the UK and mainland Europe the airport is vital to realising the economic potential of South Wales, and is inherently linked with the Cardiff Airport and St Athan Enterprise Zone (EZ) and the City Region.
19. Through their purchase of the airport in 2013, the Welsh Government has already illustrated the importance of the airport to the future economic prosperity of Wales. The Welsh Governments commitment to improving facilities, routes and ensuring that the airport is retained as an essential economic gateway is to be welcomed. However, there remains an issue with general accessibility and improvements to surface access routes to the airport and the associated EZ from the M4 should be a priority if their full economic benefits are to be fulfilled. These improvements must also deliver enhancements to other modes of transport such as rail, bus and cycling and walking making travel access to the airport seamless.

20. The continued improvement of the airport and surface access to it should therefore form an integral part of the NDF from the outset, such improvements contributing to the goal of a 'Prosperous Wales'.

Cardiff Airport and St Athan Enterprise Zone

21. Established in 2012 the Cardiff Airport and EZ is one of eight EZs in Wales which offer specific incentives to attract new and expanding business to prime locations in Wales. Focussing on the key sectors of aerospace, defence, automotive, manufacturing and engineering, the zone is centred on three distinct sites: Cardiff Airport, St Athan Aerospace Business Park and the Gateway development Zone.
22. As with the Cardiff Airport, the Welsh Government is committed to the ongoing development of the EZs and continues to work towards securing business investment. However, while the aspirations for the EZs are clearly established in the Strategic Development Framework and Vale of Glamorgan Local Development Plan, given the importance of the EZs to local, regional and national economies, they should also be prominent in a NDF.
23. As with Cardiff Airport, it is considered fundamental to the success of the EZ that surface access particularly from the M4 motorway is improved, increasing the attractiveness and competitiveness of both the airport and the EZ. While the delivery of improvement works may fall to the local authority, given the importance of the airport and the EZs to Wales, the impetus, funding and strategic direction should come from the Welsh Government and the importance of the airport to the national economy should rightly be recognised in the NDF.

M4 Junction 34 Strategic employment site and improved road links

The former Bosch site adjacent to Junction 34 is now owned and operated by a technology company Renishaw, and is a 67 Ha site with permission for commercial use. This large strategic site is in close proximity to the M4 and with an existing high tech occupier is clearly of national importance given its links and proximity to both the M4 and the main railway line. The further expansion of strategic industries at this site should be supported through the development of a road link to the A48 to the south.

M4 Corridor Opportunities e.g. Park & Ride

24. To support the growth of the Cardiff City region and to recognise the opportunities and constraints that the M4 corridor in South Wales provides in terms of access, the NDF should consider the opportunities for projects such as park and ride/ share sites in close proximity to possible main rail lines to maximise opportunities for sustainable travel, to ease congestion. Around these sustainable hubs consideration could also be given to future sites that might be suitable areas of search for new settlements.

Nationally Significant Themes

25. The following are themes that are considered to be of national significance which should be reflected in a NDF:

Affordable Housing Need and Delivery

26. There is an undeniable and extensive need for affordable housing delivery throughout Wales. All LPAs in Wales have produced Local Housing Market Assessments and this evidence should be compiled to present a national picture of affordable housing need, with a national target and strategy for delivery.

27. While the delivery of affordable housing largely takes place at a local level through the planning and housing functions of local authorities, the need is such that a strategic approach at a national level is required. Affordable housing delivery is an issue of national importance which should be reflected in a NDF.
28. The delivery of affordable housing is largely driven by market conditions and it is evident that the market is largely unable to meet demand. The NDF should therefore consider or investigate how it is possible to intervene in the market process in order to ensure the delivery of affordable homes across Wales particularly in areas where there is little or no interest through the market in affordable housing delivery.
29. The delivery of affordable housing throughout Wales will realise significant health and social well-being benefits and contribute to delivery of a sustainable Wales and contribute towards the goals set out in the Well-being and Future Generations Act particularly 'A more equal Wales'; 'A Wales of cohesive communities' and a 'A Healthier Wales'.

Infrastructure Delivery and Growth

30. Throughout the preparation of our LDP, considerable concern was expressed in representations over the ability of existing infrastructure to accommodate continued growth and the increasing pressure on limited services and facilities to cope with additional demand.
31. The NDF should recognise the need for strategic infrastructure such as roads, rail and bus hubs, schools, and community facilities to enable the level of growth expected for Wales. The NDF should consider the appropriate use of phasing to manage infrastructure delivery which where possible should be provided in advance of new developments.

New Settlements

32. During the production of the Vale of Glamorgan Local Development Plan (LDP) it was evident that there was some support for the creation of a new settlement to address the identified housing need within the administrative area. While this approach was not considered necessary or appropriate for the LDP (2011-2026), the issues and concerns of accommodating new housing on the edge of existing settlements, and the pressure on communities and infrastructure within existing settlements is going to be an issue in the future.
33. At this juncture, alternative solutions to meeting housing needs will need to be considered and in this regard, opportunities for new settlements may be appropriate in Wales.

The NDF should consider the issue of housing growth and consider the policy position in relation to, and if necessary and appropriate opportunities for, new settlements in Wales. Should such a policy approach be considered appropriate for new settlements to be built in Wales then such developments must include all infrastructure and facilities necessary to make the new settlement truly sustainable.

Resource Implications (Financial and Employment)

34. The response to the Welsh Governments Call for Evidence has been formulated by officers within the Regeneration and Planning Division within existing budgets and the preparation of the NDF will not create additional financial burdens on the authority.

Sustainability and Climate Change Implications

35. The NDF will be shaped by the goals and ways of working set out by the Well-being of Future Generations Act. Like other public bodies, the Welsh Government must work towards achieving sustainable development and meet the seven well-being goals set out in the Act. The second goal of which 'A resilient Wales' seeks to achieve a nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change).

Legal Implications (to Include Human Rights Implications)

36. There are no legal implications arising from the production of the report or the submission of the comments to the Welsh Government in response to the consultation. There are no specific Human Rights implications of this report.

Crime and Disorder Implications

37. There are no direct crime and disorder implications arising from this report. The Vale of Glamorgan Adopted Unitary Development Plan (1996-2011) and the emerging Local Development Plan (2011-2026) both contain policies which seek to create accessible and safe built environments which largely accords with the fifth goal of the Well-being and Future Generations Act which seeks to provide attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities.

Equal Opportunities Implications (to include Welsh Language issues)

38. The production of a National Development Framework is in its early stages and at this time no decision has been taken on area specific policies, investment and intervention. In addition specific projects have not been agreed. As a result a full Equality Impact Assessment is not deemed necessary at this stage. In future, and if deemed necessary and appropriate individual assessments will be undertaken as and when required.
39. Notwithstanding the above, the production of a National Development Framework has the potential to have positive impacts in relation to equality, given that key themes likely to be included and their impact upon the residents of the Vale of Glamorgan.

Corporate/Service Objectives

40. The preparation of a NDF has implications for the Council's Corporate Plan and links to Wellbeing Outcome 2 - An environmentally responsible and prosperous Vale. Objective 3 - Promoting regeneration, economic growth and employment which include an action to maximise economic growth, inward investment and employment opportunities through the Cardiff Capital Region. A further action in relation to Objective 3 relates to the delivery of transport improvements associated with the Cardiff Capital Region and Metro schemes.

Policy Framework and Budget

41. This is a matter for Executive decision by Cabinet.

Consultation (including Ward Member Consultation)

42. As this matter relates to a Vale of Glamorgan wide issue and not specific wards, there has been no specific Ward Member consultation.

Relevant Scrutiny Committee

43. Environment and Regeneration.

Background Papers

None.

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