

Meeting of:	<b>Cabinet</b>
Date of Meeting:	<b>Monday, 05 July 2021</b>
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	Corporate Performance and Resources / Environment and Regeneration
Report Title:	Project Zero - Draft Climate Change Challenge Plan
Purpose of Report:	To seek approval from Cabinet for the Climate Change Challenge Plan following the consultation process.
Report Owner:	Executive Leader and Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources
Responsible Officer:	Rob Thomas, Managing Director
Elected Member and Officer Consultation:	Due to the corporate nature of this report, no specific Ward Member consultation has been undertaken
Policy Framework:	This is a matter for decision by Cabinet.
<p>Executive Summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The draft Climate Change Challenge Plan sets out the Council’s response to the climate emergency and the work that will be undertaken as part of Project Zero.</li> <li>• The draft plan details eighteen challenges and the steps the Council proposes to take to meet those challenges as part of Project Zero. These challenges are framed around the need to demonstrate strong leadership, fulfil our responsibility to current and future generations and to make a difference now.</li> <li>• The draft plan also details some of the work already underway across the Council as part of work to adapt to and mitigate the impact of climate change. This work also forms part of Project Zero.</li> <li>• The report details the consultation undertaken on the draft Plan, the resulting feedback, and revisions to the Climate Change Challenge Plan.</li> <li>• The report also details some of the ongoing engagement as part of Project Zero and the recent Welsh Public Sector net zero guidance issued by Welsh Government to calculate carbon emissions.</li> <li>• The report also sets out the timetable for the plan being approved and endorsed by Council.</li> </ul>	

## **Recommendations**

1. That Cabinet considers the revised draft Climate Change Challenge Plan (Appendix A).
2. That Cabinet considers the feedback (Appendix B) received through the recent consultation undertaken from the 24<sup>th</sup> March to the 12<sup>th</sup> May 2021.
3. That Cabinet considers the comments and recommendations of the Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee (Appendix C) and the Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee (Appendix D) which considered the revised draft Plan in June 2021.
4. That Cabinet considers the ongoing engagement being undertaken as part of the work around Project Zero.
5. That Cabinet considers the new Welsh Public Sector net zero reporting guide issued on the 24<sup>th</sup> May 2021 and detailed later in this report.
6. That, subject to recommendations one to five above, Cabinet approves the Climate Change Challenge Plan and refers this report to Council at its meeting in July for endorsement.

## **Reasons for Recommendations**

1. To enable Cabinet to consider the draft Plan following the consultation process.
2. To enable Cabinet to consider the feedback (Appendix B) received in response to the consultation on the draft Plan.
3. To enable Cabinet to consider the comments and recommendations of the Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee (Appendix C) and the Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee (Appendix D) who considered the revised Plan in June.
4. To update Cabinet on the continuing engagement being undertaken as part of Project Zero.
5. To advise Cabinet of the publication of the new Welsh Public Sector net zero reporting guide.
6. To enable Cabinet to approve the Council's Climate Change Plan and for it to be considered by Council for endorsement.

## **1. Background**

- 1.1 At the Council meeting on the 29<sup>th</sup> July 2019 Council resolved (minute 209 refers):

- (1) T H A T the Vale of Glamorgan Council join with Welsh Government and other Councils across the UK in declaring a global 'climate emergency' in response to the findings of the IPCC report.
- (2) T H A T the Vale of Glamorgan Council reduce its own carbon emissions to net zero before the Welsh Government target of 2030 and support the implementation of the Welsh Government's new Low Carbon Delivery Plan, to help achieve the Welsh Government's ambition for the public sector in Wales to be carbon neutral.
- (3) T H A T the Vale of Glamorgan Council make representations to the Welsh and UK Governments, as appropriate, to provide the necessary powers, resources and technical support to Local Authorities in Wales to help them successfully meet the 2030 target.
- (4) T H A T the Vale of Glamorgan Council continue to work with partners across the region to develop and implement best practice methods that can deliver carbon reductions and help limit global warming.
- (5) T H A T the Vale of Glamorgan Council work with local stakeholders including Councillors, residents, young people, businesses, and other relevant parties to develop a strategy in line with a target of net zero emissions by 2030 and explore ways to maximise local benefits of these actions in other sectors such as employment, health, agriculture, transport and the economy.

**1.2** Due to work on Covid-19 it was not possible to progress the development of a climate change plan as rapidly as originally envisaged. However, during this period, work has continued across the Council and a number of reports have been presented to Cabinet to update on progress with work to tackle climate change. On the 22nd March 2021 Cabinet approved a draft Climate Change Challenge Plan for consultation as part of Project Zero.

**1.3** Project Zero is the Council's response to the climate emergency. It brings together work already being undertaken and policies, strategies and plans already in place. It sets out the challenges we face and proposed activities to meet these challenges. It recognises the importance of working as a team across the Vale and that everyone has a role to play and a responsibility to think about our legacy for future generations.

**1.4** The draft Plan reflects commitments in the Council's Corporate Plan 2020-25 which details the Council's four Well-being Objectives and how they will be delivered. The Corporate Plan includes a commitment to work to reduce the organisation's carbon emissions to net zero by 2030 and to encourage others to follow our lead as part of minimising the negative impact of our activities on the environment. The Corporate Plan is supported each year by an Annual Delivery Plan (ADP) and the ADP for 2021-22 also includes a number of activities that will contribute to work to tackle climate change.

- 1.5 The consultation draft of the Climate Change Challenge Plan articulated how the Council will deliver the above Corporate Plan commitment and also commitments in the PSB Climate Emergency Charter and the Council's Coronavirus Recovery Strategy. The draft Plan supports work for a green recovery.
- 1.6 Following approval of the draft Plan for consultation by Cabinet on the 22<sup>nd</sup> March consultation on the draft Plan was undertaken between the 24<sup>th</sup> March and the 12<sup>th</sup> May.
- 1.7 Cabinet are asked to consider the revised Climate Change Challenge Plan and the feedback from the consultation.

## **2. Key Issues for Consideration**

- 2.1 Project Zero sets out the Council's commitment to reduce its own carbon emissions to net zero by 2030, but the ambition of Project Zero is wider than just reducing the Council's carbon emissions. It recognises the Council's role as a community leader and how through its policies and actions it can work with, support and influence others to make changes and consider their impact on the environment.
- 2.2 The Climate Change Challenge Plan (Appendix A) details eighteen challenges framed around the need to demonstrate strong leadership, fulfil our responsibility to current and future generations and to make a difference now.
- 2.3 *Demonstrate strong leadership* - We will demonstrate strong leadership as we meet the challenge to effectively engage with the community and our partners about how we can work together. We will raise awareness about the issues and the work we are undertaking and develop a better understanding about where we can have the biggest impact and how we can influence others to work with us and be part of an ambitious programme of change.
- 2.4 *Fulfil our responsibility to current and future generation* - In meeting these challenges, we will encourage behaviour change and adapt the necessary infrastructure to meet the current and future challenges of climate change. The focus for this section is on transport, food, nature, energy, waste, water use and flooding. In meeting the challenges, we will support a green economy and the importance of balancing economic growth with the need to minimise negative impact on the environment and our natural resources. We will take forward work to improve the green infrastructure in the Vale and to promote sustainable food systems.
- 2.5 *Make a difference now* - These challenges focus on how the Council as an organisation provides its services and manages its assets. The proposed activities

relate to our procurement practices, schools and council housing, how we manage our land and assets, staff travel and investment in technology.

- 2.6** The Challenge Plan details the actions the Council proposes to take to meet these challenges and deliver Project Zero. Examples of some of the activity detailed in the draft plan include, a new Green Infrastructure Plan, improving energy efficiency in our buildings, schools and housing. A green economic growth strategy will be implemented, schemes to achieve a modal shift will be progressed and we will establish a re-use shop and review our procurement policies.
- 2.7** Work on climate change is integral to the Council's transformation programme and one of the key drivers. Change will be required across the Council to meet the challenges of Project Zero and to ensure there is a consistent and ambitious approach to tackling climate change. Integration and teamwork are key to the successful delivery of Project Zero which will involve all services across the Council.
- 2.8** Some of the changes that have been made as a result of Covid-19 have been in line with steps needed to tackle climate change e.g. increased working from home, greater use of technology to support online meetings and less travel connected with work. In developing Project Zero and taking forward the Climate Change Challenge Plan we have built on these changes to create a cohesive programme of work.
- 2.9** The Plan also recognises that it is important to ensure that across the Council expertise is developed and shared. Members and officers will be offered training on specific issues such as carbon literacy as well as general awareness raising. We will also engage external expertise to work with us to inform how we can further develop our insight and evidence base to inform our decision making and report progress.
- 2.10** Welsh Government issued a [Welsh Sector Net Zero Reporting Guide](#) on the 24<sup>th</sup> May 2021. The guidance details the principles and priorities for the Welsh Public Sector Net Zero Carbon reporting approach, its operational and organisational scope and the data which public bodies in Wales will need to assemble in order to fulfil the reporting requirements. A Net Zero Carbon reporting spreadsheet has been published along with the guide. The aim of this guide is to develop a universal guide set of instructions for use by Welsh public bodies, to estimate baseline emissions, identify priority sources and to monitor progress towards meeting the collective ambition of a carbon neutral public sector by 2030. The deadline for the first report from public sector bodies to Welsh Government is currently being discussed and it is likely that data from 2019/20 will be used as the baseline for the reports. A group of officers from across the Council has been established to consider the guidance and to draw together contributions from the various departments to inform any reporting to Welsh Government.

- 2.11** The Challenge Plan has been revised to reflect feedback from the consultation and the ongoing work within the Council as well as guidance from Welsh Government. A report detailing the consultation undertaken and the results of the consultation is attached as Appendix B.

### **The Consultation**

- 2.12** Consultation on the draft plan was undertaken from the 24<sup>th</sup> March to the 12<sup>th</sup> May. The draft plan and information about Project Zero was made available on the Council's website with a survey seeking the views of the public and our partners. Three short videos were also developed to convey the key messages of the draft plan and to encourage people to have their say as part of Project Zero. The consultation was promoted via social media to maintain momentum and this included a series of twitter polls.
- 2.13** An email with a link to the draft plan and the survey was sent by the Managing Director to a wide range of partners including Town and Community Councils and business.
- 2.14** Officers attended meetings of the Vale 50+ Strategy Forum and a session arranged by the Council's Youth Services to discuss the draft Plan.
- 2.15** Four online discussion sessions were held via Zoom to discuss with members of the public, community groups and other partners key issues within the Plan. The sessions were led by senior management and focused on energy and buildings, land, transport and waste.
- 2.16** The draft Plan was also considered by Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee, Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee, Community Liaison Committee and the Voluntary Sector Joint Liaison Committee. The views and comments expressed at these committee meetings have also informed changes to the Plan.
- 2.17** A Project Zero email box has been created and members of the public and partners were also invited to email comments and suggestions. This email address will remain live to enable people to continue to contact the Council on this subject.
- 2.18** Details of the consultation feedback are included in the Engagement Report (Appendix B). In summary there were 132 responses to the online survey, 2,703 responses to the 18 twitter polls and 42 people booked on the four the Online zoom sessions with a number of people attending several sessions.
- 2.19** Key issues raised as part of the consultation and which have informed changes to the Plan include:
- The Council should be ambitious in its response to the climate emergency.
  - Importance of nature and our green infrastructure.

- The Council must work with developers to ensure new developments are sustainable and also consider the use of existing buildings and empty buildings.
- Concern about building on greenfield sites.
- Issues around segregation between cyclists, pedestrians and vehicles and the need for cycle routes to be safer and more connected.
- Improving active travel and public transport would make people think about changing their travel choices.
- Support for the Council having a bigger role in encouraging people to think about where their food comes from and the impact of food choices on the environment.
- Working closely with community groups and promotion of the importance of reduce, reuse and repair as well as recycle.
- Involving the community and signposting to local groups and activities.
- Support for improving the energy efficiency of council buildings and for providing information to help homeowners improve the energy efficiency of their homes.
- The opportunities should be taken to work with young people and schools in particular.

**2.20** All elected Members were invited to attend a briefing on the 25<sup>th</sup> May and receive details of the consultation feedback. This provided a further opportunity to discuss Project Zero and key issues around climate change.

## Revisions to the Plan

**2.21** The following changes have been made to the Plan.

**2.22 Foreword (pages 2-3)** – Additional wording has been added to reflect the importance of working with the community and to thank people for getting involved in the consultation. The foreword was previously in the Managing Director’s name due to the consultation being undertaken during the pre-election period before the Senedd elections but is now in the Leader’s name.

**2.23 Our Commitment to Change (pages 4-9)** – This section provides context for the work on climate change in terms of corporate and national policies and documents. Reference has been made to the Welsh Government plan ‘Future Wales – The National Plan 2040’ as this is an important national plan which provides a framework for a number of areas of activity within the Challenge Plan.

**2.24 Our Programme for Change (pages 10-18)** – This section details the eighteen challenges and the actions that will be taken to meet those challenges. The challenges are not set out in any order of priority but have been grouped together where there are clear links.

**2.25 Demonstrate Strong Leadership** – this section includes challenges around engagement, communication, developing our evidence base and how we influence others. Changes to this section have been made to place a stronger

emphasis on working with the community and promoting community projects. The section on developing our evidence base has also been strengthened to emphasise the importance of understanding our impact on the environment.

- 2.26** *Fulfil our responsibility to current and future generations* – this section includes challenges around transport, planning, the economy, energy, natural resources, food and waste. Changes have been made to reflect feedback from the consultation, for example, around safer and more connected cycling routes, working with the community, concern about nature and green spaces and the importance of our food choices. An action has been included regarding the review of the Local Development Plan, there is an increased emphasis on shopping locally and buying local produce. An action has also been included about the Big Fresh Catering Company and one around energy efficiency advice has also been included.
- 2.27** *Make a difference* – this section includes challenges around how the Council manages its assets including schools and housing and how we operate as an organisation. No changes have been made to this section and through the consultation there was support for improving our buildings including schools and for how we use technology. There was also support for considering the environment when making spending decisions.
- 2.28** **How Project Zero Works (pages 18-21)** – This section of the Plan highlights links to a range of existing plans and strategies which also contribute to work on climate change. It also emphasises the importance of engagement and having a strong evidence base and also governance arrangements for Project Zero. The changes made to this section include reference to the Welsh Public Sector Net Zero Carbon Reporting Guide and working with Natural Resources Wales who submitted a very constructive and supportive letter in response to the consultation. The engagement section has been amended to highlight that consultation feedback emphasised the importance of sharing information and listening to what the public and partners think.
- 2.29** **The Case for Change (pages 22-26)** – Appendix A of the Challenge Plan details a range of evidence to support the need for change. There have been no changes to this section.
- 2.30** **Glossary (pages 27-29)** - A glossary has been added as Appendix B to the Challenge Plan to explain some of the more technical terms in the Plan.

### **Consideration of the revised Plan by Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee and Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee**

- 2.31** The Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee considered the consultation feedback and revised Challenge Plan at their meeting on the 15<sup>th</sup> June 2021. The minutes of the meeting are included with this report as Appendix C. Members of the Committee received a presentation on the consultation and

the subsequent changes to the plan. Issues raised by members of the Committee included the low response rate to the survey, local food production and markets, the levels of housing proposed in the Local Development Plan, the importance of quantifying levels of carbon emissions and understanding the impact of our actions and support for local Town Centres as part of work to encourage people to think local.

- 2.32** The Committee agreed to accept the revised challenge plan and noted the consultation feedback the ongoing engagement and the new Welsh Public Sector Net Zero Reporting Guide from Welsh Government.
- 2.33** The Corporate Performance and Scrutiny Committee considered the consultation feedback and revised Challenge Plan at their meeting on the 16<sup>th</sup> June 2021. The minutes of the meeting are included with this report as Appendix D. Members of the Committee also received a presentation on the consultation and the subsequent changes to the plan and a number of committee members had also participated in the discussions at the meeting of the Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee meeting the previous evening.
- 2.34** Issues raised by members of the Committee included biodiversity and animals and wildlife, materials used in textiles and their impact on the environment and a particular reference to school uniforms was made. This also reflected some of the changes made to the Challenge Plan to place an increased emphasis on repair and reuse. There was a request for more detailed information about some of the savings resulting from work already underway e.g. changes to street lighting and school facilities. Further discussions included the importance of working with partners and taking a collaborative approach, for example, through the Public Services Board and with transport providers and other large employers and service providers such as the UHB to enable people to change how they travel. Members also highlighted the need to engage with groups of the community that have previously been hard for us to reach, and to ensure that future engagement is as inclusive as possible.
- 2.35** The Committee agreed that the draft Climate Change Challenge Plan be noted and that the Committee's comments referred back to Cabinet. The Committee also noted the consultation feedback the ongoing engagement and the new Welsh Public Sector net zero reporting guide from Welsh Government.
- 2.36** The discussions and views expressed at both Committee meetings will shape the ongoing delivery of Project Zero. In particular the need for robust evidence around the changes made, the importance of community engagement, reporting of progress across the breadth of activity to assist with monitoring and to encourage behaviour change and the role of the Council as a community leader. The importance of working in partnership and influencing others will be embedded across all areas of Project Zero.

### **Project Zero Governance**

- 2.37** Project Zero will be overseen by the Council’s Reshaping Board which includes Cabinet members and the Strategic Leadership Team. The Council’s Insight Board will also have a critical role in shaping work, making connections and identifying opportunities. In addition, technical staff will be engaged in work not just at an operational level but to bring their professional expertise to innovation sessions.
- 2.38** The Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee and the Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee will both have a role in scrutinising progress in meeting the challenges to tackle climate change and deliver Project Zero.
- 2.39** The Council has a number of performance indicators which will help determine progress in responding to the climate emergency and being carbon neutral by 2030. These are reported quarterly as part of the Council’s performance management arrangements. A suite of indicators will be developed to demonstrate progress and the difference we are making and to inform regular reviews of Project Zero. We will also engage professional expertise and the information gained from completing the data requirements for Welsh Government to help develop our baseline and greater insight into our carbon emissions.

### **Climate Change Challenge Plan Timetable**

- 2.40** Detailed below is the timetable for approval and endorsement of the Climate Change Challenge Plan.

5 <sup>th</sup> July	Cabinet
26 <sup>th</sup> July	Council

### **Ongoing engagement**

- 2.41** The Plan includes a commitment to continue to engage on this topic and to work with the community to respond effectively to the climate emergency. The consultation has shown support for the Council leading by example and a willingness from people to work together and bring about change. Therefore, although the consultation has ended the conversations will continue.
- 2.42** The Managing Director has already written to all Head Teachers with an open invitation to contact the Council to discuss how we can work together. This will enable us to hear what our children and young people think about climate change and their hopes for the future but also enable schools to make use of different expertise across the Council. Officers are already working with Barry Island Primary School and have taken part in a recent INSET day and an Enrichment Week in June where the whole school was involved in activities to

learn more about climate change and the environment. Discussions are also taking to place to consider how we can link in with school councils.

- 2.43** A productive meeting was held with local youth groups and was facilitated by the Council's Youth Service and the young people will discuss at their next meeting how they want to work with the Council regarding tackling climate change.
- 2.44** A number of community groups have also contacted the Council through the Project Zero mailbox asking for information and whether officers can attend meetings.
- 2.45** As part of our work within the Public Services Board (PSB) meetings have been arranged between PSB partners and Town and Community Councils to discuss how we can work together on a number of issues and in particular on climate change. These meetings took place at the end of June.
- 2.46** Work will also commence to develop the Project Zero web pages which will provide a resource base for the work on climate change. It is the intention that the Challenge Plan is a dynamic document and that the web pages include details of progress, case studies, links to relevant plans and strategies and research and evidence that will inform Project Zero.
- 2.47** Cabinet are asked to consider the recent consultation and revisions to the Challenge Plan that set out a framework for taking this work forward and the recommendations of the meetings of the Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee meeting on the 15<sup>th</sup> June and the Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee on the 16<sup>th</sup> June and to refer this report to Council for its endorsement.

### **3. How do proposals evidence the Five Ways of Working and contribute to our Well-being Objectives?**

- 3.1** The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 is about sustainable development. The Act sets out a 'sustainable development principle' which specifies that the public bodies listed in the Act must act in a manner which seeks to ensure the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. In meeting their sustainability duty, each body must set objectives that highlight the work the body will undertake to contribute to meeting the seven Well-being Goals for Wales.
- 3.2** The activities set out in this report will contribute to the national well-being goals and help ensure we have a resilient Wales The five ways of working will be embedded throughout Project Zero as we will be working collaboratively through the PSB and with other partners. It is recognised that this is a long-term project, but that action needs to be taken now and that prevention will be critical

element to this work. Involvement of the community in order for them to shape our activities and to understand the need for change will be fundamental to us making a difference through our activities and we will be integrating work on this agenda across the Council ensuring this is seen as the responsibility of all Directorates and staff.

## **4. Resources and Legal Considerations**

### **Financial**

- 4.1** Project Zero encompasses a wide range of activity and will be delivered from existing resources and the fund established from reserves to support work on climate change. We will continue to seek additional funding including grant funding to support our activities and the ambitions of Project Zero.
- 4.2** The consultation also supported the Council considering the impact of climate change when making spending decisions.

### **Employment**

- 4.3** There are no specific employment implications arising as a direct result of this report.

### **Legal (Including Equalities)**

- 4.4** There are no direct legal implications arising from the activities detailed within this report, but activities undertaken in response to the climate change emergency will be consistent with duties under the Environment Act and the Well-being of Future Generations Act.
- 4.5** The feedback gathered during the consultation on the draft plan has informed Project Zero and equality impact assessments will be undertaken for different activities within Project Zero as necessary. These assessments will reflect the consultation findings and other relevant engagement and data.

## **5. Background Papers**

Council Notice of Motion 29 July 2019 - Minute 209

<https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/Committee%20Reports/Council/2019/19-07-29/Minutes.pdf>

Cabinet Report 23 March 2020 Minute C280 - Responding to the Climate Emergency

<https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/Committee%20Reports/Cabinet/2020/20-03-23/Minutes.pdf>

Vale of Glamorgan Council Corporate Plan April 2020

[https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/our\\_council/achieving\\_our\\_vision/Corporate-Plan.aspx](https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/our_council/achieving_our_vision/Corporate-Plan.aspx)

Vale of Glamorgan Council Coronavirus Recovery Strategy Cabinet 21<sup>st</sup> September 2020

[https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/\\_Committee%20Reports/Cabinet/2020/20-09-21/Coronavirus-Recovery-Strategy.pdf](https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/_Committee%20Reports/Cabinet/2020/20-09-21/Coronavirus-Recovery-Strategy.pdf)

Cabinet Report 2nd November 2020 Minute C357 - Developing a Climate Change Action Plan

[https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/\\_Committee%20Reports/Cabinet/2020/20-11-02/Minutes.pdf](https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/_Committee%20Reports/Cabinet/2020/20-11-02/Minutes.pdf)

Cabinet Report 25 January 2021 Minute C451 – Vale Public Services Board Climate Emergency Charter

[https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/\\_Committee%20Reports/Cabinet/2021/21-01-25/Minutes.pdf](https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/_Committee%20Reports/Cabinet/2021/21-01-25/Minutes.pdf)

Cabinet Report 22 March 2021 Minute C526 – Project Zero - Draft Climate Change Challenge Plan

[https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/\\_Committee%20Reports/Cabinet/2021/21-03-22/Minutes-of-21-03-22.pdf](https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/_Committee%20Reports/Cabinet/2021/21-03-22/Minutes-of-21-03-22.pdf)

Welsh Government - Welsh Sector net zero reporting guide 24<sup>th</sup> May 2021.

[https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2021-05/welsh-public-sector-net-zero-reporting-guide\\_1.pdf](https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2021-05/welsh-public-sector-net-zero-reporting-guide_1.pdf)



**Vale of Glamorgan Council Climate Change Challenge Plan  
2021-2030  
Post Consultation Draft June 2021**

**A copy of the Plan is available in Welsh.**

## Foreword

In July 2019 the Vale of Glamorgan Council joined with Welsh Government and other Councils across the UK in declaring a global 'climate emergency' in response to the findings of the IPCC 'Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C' (October 2018). The Council made a commitment to:

- Reduce the Council's carbon emissions to net zero before the Welsh Government target of 2030 and support the implementation of the Welsh Government's new Low Carbon Delivery Plan.
- Make representations to the Welsh and UK Governments, as appropriate, to provide the necessary powers, resources and technical support to Local Authorities in Wales to help them successfully meet the 2030 target.
- Continue to work with partners across the region.
- Work with local stakeholders including Councillors, residents, young people, businesses, and other relevant parties to develop a strategy in line with a target of net zero emissions by 2030 and explore ways to maximise local benefits of these actions in other sectors such as employment, health, agriculture, transport and the economy.

Since then, we have continued to make changes across the organisation and to embark on ambitious projects to reduce our carbon emissions and to send a clear message that we must all work together to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change. We have an opportunity to change and to make a difference and we are bringing all of this work together as **Project Zero**. We will work with the community and our partners to make the necessary changes, focusing on energy, waste, food, buildings, transport, land use and procurement. Our key target is to reduce the Council's carbon emissions to net zero by 2030 but we also want to influence and encourage others to reduce their emissions and to be part of **Project Zero**.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) was set up by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to provide an objective source of scientific information on climate change. The **IPCC** is clear that climate change is real and human activities are the main cause. **Project Zero** is the Vale of Glamorgan Council's response to this climate change emergency.

In 2019 the Vale of Glamorgan Council declared a climate emergency. However, since early 2020 we have been tackling another emergency as we have worked with partners and the community to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic has changed all of our lives, how we work, socialise, travel and shop and its effects will remain with us for some time. The pandemic has brought about significant challenge and hardship and it has also demonstrated our ability to change, to be more

responsive and to be more innovative. We must build on what we have learnt and apply this to how we respond to the many and complex issues that climate change presents.

We need to think about the long term and plan for the future, but we also need to act quickly and influence others to act now. We need to have effective communications to bring about behaviour change within the Council and within the community. We need to understand the science and to work as a team and understand how our actions effect the lives of others.

The consultation we have undertaken as part of the development of this plan has demonstrated support across the community for an ambitious and robust approach to the climate emergency. We are grateful to all those who have taken the time to comment on the plan and who have expressed a willingness to work with us and within their community to tackle climate change and protect our natural resources.

Our work to tackle climate change will continue to evolve. The world does not yet have all the answers but we are learning all the time about what we need to stop doing and what we need to start doing. Despite the significant professional expertise within the Council we need to work with and learn from others and listen to the community to shape **Project Zero**. The consultation and engagement around Project Zero have highlighted the wealth of knowledge and innovation across our communities and a passion and energy to encourage behaviour change. It is clear that some of the changes we need to make will require investment and some may be unpopular, but we need to consider the whole cost of what we do and how we do it.

Through the work we are already undertaking and engagement to date we have identified a number of challenges and steps to deliver **Project Zero**. These challenges are framed around the need to:

- **Demonstrate strong leadership** - the Council must lead by example.
- **Fulfil our responsibility to current and future generations** – these are the areas where we help shape the activities of others through our policies and services and where we can have a significant influence on the actions of others.
- **Make a difference now** – this refers to how the Council operates as an organisation, an employer, buildings and landowner and landlord.

Our commitment to you is to change, but if we are to succeed this will also require changes from our partners, the business community and our residents. I am confident now more than ever that across the Vale there is a willingness to work together and do what is necessary to protect our future and that of generations to come. Together we can make the Vale more resilient, greener and healthier for us all.



**Councillor Neil Moore**

**Leader of the Vale of Glamorgan Council**

## Our Commitment to Change

The Council's vision is '**Strong Communities with a Bright Future**' and our work to tackle climate change is part of delivering that vision. There is a wide range of evidence which supports the need for change and the urgent need to respond to climate change and [Appendix A](#) details some of the evidence at a global, UK, Welsh and local level and the reasons why we need to make changes.

When the Council declared the climate emergency in 2019 there was already significant work being undertaken and this work has continued to progress and make a difference. One of the key steps we are now taking is to bring this work together into a more co-ordinated and cohesive approach to tackling climate change. **Project Zero** is enabling us to reflect on what is already in place, where we need to build momentum and where we most need to focus our efforts.

### Our Values

The Council has a set of four values and these will be embedded in our work on climate change. In the context of our work on climate change these values mean the following;

**Ambitious** - transforming how we work



**Open** - welcoming new ideas and being ready to listen, learn and change



**Together** - working with our partners and the community to achieve the necessary changes

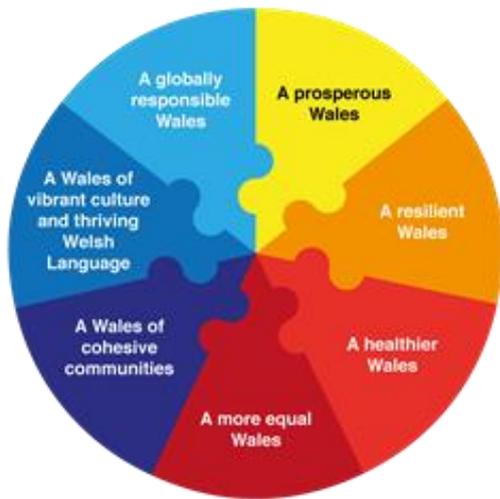


**Proud** - taking pride in what we have already achieved and working towards a legacy for the Vale that we can all be proud of



## The Well-being of Future Generations Act

**Project Zero** will also contribute to the National Well-being Goals as set out in the Well-being of Future Generations Act and the five ways of working will be evident in all that we do.



## Future Wales – The National Plan 2040

[Future Wales](#) was published by Welsh Government in February 2021 and is a framework for planning the change and development Wales will need over the next two decades. It is a development plan with a strategy for addressing key national priorities through the planning system, including sustaining and developing a vibrant economy, achieving decarbonisation and climate-resilience, developing strong ecosystems and improving the health and well-being of our communities. Future Wales will influence significant areas of Council activity.



## The Corporate Plan

The Council's Well-being Objectives provide the framework for the Council's five-year [Corporate Plan 2020-25](#). These objectives are detailed below and all of them are relevant to our work on climate change and the need to consider the impact on our natural resources of everything we do:

- To work with and for our communities
- To support learning, employment and sustainable economic growth
- To support people at home and in their community
- To respect, enhance and enjoy our environment



## Vale Public Services Board

In February 2020 the Council signed a [Climate Emergency Charter](#) with the Vale Public Services Board and this sets out the PSB's shared commitment to lead by example, take positive action and to reduce our impact. Together we will:

- Reduce our emissions to mitigate the effects of climate change whilst adapting to its impacts
- Be kinder to our environment
- Be healthier
- Become a carbon neutral public sector by 2030

**Project Zero** describes how the Council will work to meet our commitments in the PSB charter and reflects the importance of working with the community and across all sectors to meet the many challenges we face.

## What we are already doing

Some of the work the Council is already taking forward and which will be part of **Project Zero** is detailed below and demonstrates the breadth of activity across our services.

### Planning

- The Local Development Plan (LDP) provides the **local planning policy** framework for delivering sustainable development, specific guidance has also been developed seeking enhancements on Biodiversity, Trees and Development, Travel Plans and Renewable Energy.
- The LDP target of granting planning permissions sufficient to meet 10.6% (56.68 GWh) of projected electricity demand through **renewable energy** sources by 2020 has been met.
- Since July 2018 we have secured a replanting ratio of 2:1 for the removal of trees with a preservation orders (TPO) or trees in a conservation area (TCA) in accordance with the **Trees, Woodlands, Hedgerows and Development Supplementary Planning Guidance**.

### Energy

- The Council purchases **100% of electricity from renewable sources** and has granted planning permission to a number of solar farms.
- We have undertaken over **100 energy saving projects** across council buildings including switching old inefficient lighting to LED lighting and the introduction of better energy controls.
- We have begun switching heating from gas to electricity by installing a **Ground Source Heat pump** at Cadoxton House in Barry and an **Air Source Heat pump** at BSC2 (the Engine Room) in Barry. These sites have seen significant improvements in energy consumption and there are plans for further installations.
- We have installed Solar panels on 14 buildings with a combined capacity of 480 KW. All systems are sized appropriately to match demand at the buildings on which they are mounted.
- 68% of the Council's **street lighting** has been converted to LED with plans to increase this to 92% by the summer of 2021.

### Waste

- Over 72% (72.3%) of **household waste** collected by the Council was prepared for reuse and/or recycled during the first half of 2020/21, this exceeds the statutory target of 64% for 2020/21.
- All tenders for Council contracts now specify the reduced use of **single use plastics** and all new tenancies and food concessions that are granted prohibit the use of single use plastics.

### Food

- We have reduced **food miles** by changing our milk supplier to a local dairy farm just outside Bridgend. We have gone straight to the milk producer who now supplies all of our schools rather than using a company to supply on behalf of farmers.
- The Council-owned Big Fresh Catering Company is making a conscious effort to reduce or eradicate **single use plastics**. They are working with suppliers to find alternative products and

have for example changed the ice cream product in all of our schools from a polystyrene tub to a recyclable cardboard tub, which has helped reduce waste within our kitchens.

- The Big Fresh Catering Company is working with the 21<sup>st</sup> century schools team to reduce the amount of **carbon produced** from our kitchen equipment.

## Transport

- The Council had £3.44million within the S106 account at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 committed to **sustainable transport** i.e. walking, cycling and public transport infrastructure, with schemes being programmed in a number of areas including Dinas Powys, Wick and Rhoose.
- All relevant planning applications are required to be accompanied by a travel plan to promote **sustainable travel** choices and prevent unnecessary car use and since March 2019 at least 10% of car parking spaces on non-residential developments are required to have electric vehicle charging points infrastructure.
- **Active Travel schemes** have been delivered to improve opportunities for walking and cycling in a number of areas including Cowbridge, Llantwit Major, Penarth Heights, Lavernock Road/Cosmeston, Sully Road/St Josephs School and South Road/Hayes Road/Sully Moors Road.
- The **Nextbike** scheme was launched in Penarth in 2020 and there have been over 1400 rentals across 5 docking stations between November 2020 and January 2021. Docking stations have also been installed at Cosmeston and Sully with plans for 2 stations in Dinas Powys next financial year.
- We are working with our schools to **encourage cycling** and 6 balance bikes have been provided to every primary school in the Vale and there are plans to provide 48 bikes for Years 5&6 to complete cycle proficiency training at selected schools in deprived areas. 33 scooterpods have been provided to 26 schools, 3 cyclepods were provided to schools and cycle shelters were installed at 4 schools in 2020/21.

## Council Housing

- Works undertaken to the Council's housing stock through the WHQS have improved **energy efficiency and reduced fuel poverty**. We have raised the average SAP (energy performance rating) rating from the low 40s to 65 with improvements including modern windows and doors, new roofs, insulation and modern heating systems.
- We are piloting an **Optimised Retrofit Programme** in our council housing with Welsh Government grant funding to expand knowledge and improve local contractor capability in green heating services, to decarbonise the domestic heating market and provide sustainable council homes with an EPC target rating of A.

## Schools

- The Council has designed a **net-zero carbon primary school building** which is being delivered as part of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme. When completed, Llancarfan Primary School will be the first net-zero carbon (in operation) primary school in Wales.
- Carbon has also been significantly reduced during the **construction process** with 99% of construction waste being recycled or energy recovered to reduce emissions from raw material extraction and to avoid landfill use.
- The Council has been awarded an additional £1,050,000 from Welsh Government to support **decarbonisation** measures as part of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme.
- We have installed photovoltaic panels (PV) on a number of school sites to increase use of **renewable energy** and also utilised Salix funding to implement a range of **energy efficiency** measures across schools in the Vale.
- We have also installed **electric vehicle charging** stations at selected school sites.
- Over **1,200 trees** from the Woodland Trust are due to be planted as part of our 21st Century School projects which will help create wildlife areas and also contribute to improved air quality around schools.

## Our Land

- All our **country parks and the Heritage Coast** only use peat free compost for all gardening projects. Both country parks have created in house composting areas and produce their own compost for use on site. We have also reduced pesticide and herbicide use across our land.
- In 2019/20 216,905m<sup>2</sup> of **parks, open spaces and highways land** was sown with wildflowers or was maintained as a naturalised area. Section 106 contributions have also been used to enhance public open space with wild-flower, bulb and tree planting including £10k for a comprehensive tree planting scheme in Penarth in 2020/21.

The Council has also made a number of changes in recent years to reduce the impact of the organisation on the environment and to demonstrate strong leadership to staff, partners and the local community. We have implemented a space project to rationalise the amount of office space we need, we have utilised technology to support more agile and flexible working, benefiting customers, employees and the environment. We have given clear messages to staff about reducing waste, reuse and recycling within the workplace and have made significant improvements to our buildings to improve energy efficiency. We have also signed the Vale PSB Staff Healthy Travel Charter.

Regular communication about changes being made and recognition of the contribution of different teams and individual staff members has helped create a culture where staff feel their well-being is valued and an understanding of the connections between well-being and our environment. Staff are encouraged to generate new ideas to help transform how the Council works and their commitment, innovation and expertise are an important part of **Project Zero**.

## Our Programme for Change

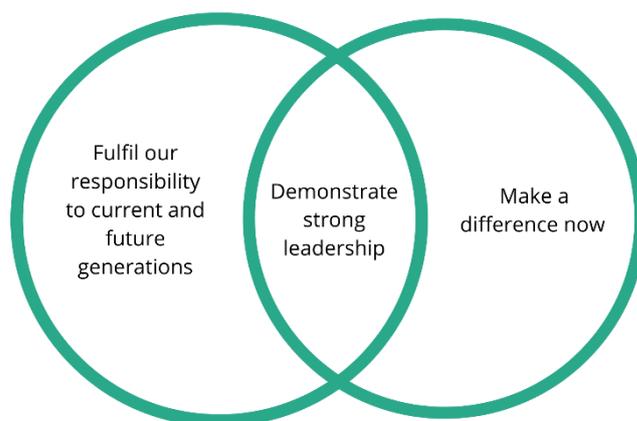
**Project Zero** articulates the direction we want to take and how we want to change. It brings a great deal of work together, new ideas and ways of working as well as continuing with the good work already taking place, for example improving our school buildings, working with developers and the community and encouraging behaviour change.

The Council is a diverse and complex organisation and the opportunities for change are considerable. One of our tasks is to develop our insight into which changes can have the most effect, where we should target our resources to make the biggest difference whilst recognising that we need a combination of small changes and radical and ambitious transformation.

We have declared an emergency and simply continuing with current practices will not deliver the outcomes we need. We are already doing a great deal, but we need to do more. Our response needs to be dynamic and needs to evolve. As an organisation and as a community we need to change, we need to challenge, and we also need to focus on what the priorities are for us an organisation and for the Vale. This is **Project Zero**.

Through **Project Zero** we have identified eighteen challenges which reflect what we believe needs to change as part of an effective response to the climate emergency. Work in some areas will be more advanced than in others and some activities will take longer to deliver than others but together they form an ambitious programme of work that we are committed to deliver. We have committed to being carbon neutral by 2030 and by meeting these challenges and embedding work on climate change across the Council we can achieve our target and a brighter future for the Vale. Our Challenges and the changes we will make are detailed below and are framed around the need to:

- **Demonstrate strong leadership** - which is integral to all of the steps outlined below, the Council must lead by example.
- **Fulfil our responsibility to current and future generations** – these are the areas where we help shape the activities of others through our policies and services and where we can have a significant influence on the actions of others.
- **Make a difference now** – this refers to how the Council operates as an organisation, an employer, buildings and land owner and landlord.



<b>Demonstrate strong leadership</b>	
<p>We will demonstrate strong leadership as we meet the challenge to effectively engage with the community and our partners about how we can work together. We will raise awareness about the issues and the work we are undertaking and develop a better understanding about where we can have the biggest impact and how we can influence others to work with us and be part of an ambitious programme of change.</p>	
Our challenges are to:	Steps we will take:
<p><b>Engage</b> with the community and listen to their priorities for tackling climate change and protecting our natural resources, supporting them to make a difference and to shape our collective ambitions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build momentum around the Climate Change Community Conversation as an ambitious campaign for change.</li> <li>• Involve Stakeholder groups and develop a green ambassadors group to shape our plans and encourage behaviour change.</li> <li>• Promote volunteering opportunities and community projects.</li> </ul>
<p>Raise awareness and understanding by promoting <b>consistent and clear messages</b> to our staff, our communities and partners about the difference we can make and are making by changing our behaviour and transforming our services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a co-ordinated programme of internal and external communications.</li> <li>• Report on the progress being made and the impact of the changes we make.</li> <li>• Showcase community projects across the Vale.</li> <li>• Signpost people to information and services within their community.</li> </ul>
<p>Develop our <b>evidence base and insight</b> to understand more fully the potential impact and 'costs' of activities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bring in external expertise and research best practice in other organisations inc. with PSB partners to understand our impact.</li> <li>• Provide training for staff and Members.</li> <li>• Calculate and understand the Council's carbon footprint and publish other key data detailing our performance and progress.</li> <li>• Set meaningful targets towards reducing our negative impact on the environment.</li> </ul>

<p>Embrace our role as community leaders to work with and <b>influence and enable</b> others to bring about the changes necessary to tackle climate change.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with Welsh Government and influence policy change and legislation.</li> <li>• Work within the Cardiff Capital Region to bring about change across the region.</li> <li>• Work with PSB partners to deliver the commitments in the PSB Climate Emergency Charter.</li> <li>• Work with business and industry, Town and Community Councils, Community groups and the Third Sector to make a difference locally.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Fulfil our responsibility to current and future generations</b></p> <p>In meeting these challenges, we will encourage behaviour change and adapt the necessary infrastructure to meet the current and future challenges of climate change. The focus for this section is on transport, food, nature, energy, waste, water use and flooding. In meeting the challenges, we will support a green economy and the importance of balancing economic growth with the need to minimise negative impact on the environment and our natural resources. We will take forward work to improve the green infrastructure in the Vale and to promote sustainable food systems.</p>	
<p><b>Our challenges are to:</b></p>	<p><b>Steps we will take:</b></p>
<p>Protect and enhance green and blue space<sup>1</sup>, biodiversity and, ecosystem resilience and improve understanding of the importance of our natural environment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and implement a Green Infrastructure Plan including a survey of all trees in the Vale and an assessment of the current infrastructure.</li> <li>• Implement the biodiversity forward plan and raise awareness about the importance of nature and wildlife</li> <li>• Replace lost trees and promote tree planting across the Vale including working with owners of large areas of land.</li> <li>• Improve existing and create more green and blue spaces through Council led schemes, s.106 funds and new transport schemes.</li> <li>• Work with local communities to increase the number of allotments and community garden space.</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> green spaces, refers to areas such as woods, meadows and parks and blue space includes rivers, watercourses and sea

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Produce Sustainable Urban Drainage Guidance.</li> </ul>
<p>Ensure our <b>planning policies</b> and <b>regeneration activities</b> support work to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change and reduce negative impact on the environment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review/produce Supplementary Planning Guidance to support work on tackling climate change.</li> <li>• Maximise opportunities to meet our communities need for housing, employment and services through, where possible, the sustainable redevelopment of brown-field land in appropriate locations, through the existing Local Development Plan and the plan review commencing in June 2021</li> <li>• Work with developers to develop zero carbon buildings.</li> <li>• Create more energy efficient buildings through planning policy.</li> <li>• Require all new and significant developments to implement appropriate sustainable drainage system (SuDS) to appropriately manage surface water, water quantity and biodiversity.</li> <li>• Use S106 agreements to invest in environmental and sustainable transport measures.</li> <li>• Work with Cardiff City Region to explore opportunities to promote and develop clean growth hubs capitalising on Barry as a dock and maximising renewable energy potential.</li> </ul>
<p>Achieve a modal shift away from cars to more <b>sustainable forms of transport</b> with an increase in walking, cycling and the use of less polluting transport.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work within the Cardiff Capital Region to improve public transport options for the region and implement taxi charging points as well as a future network of car park and bus charging points.</li> <li>• Work with developers to ensure new business, leisure and housing developments plan appropriately for transport needs and encourage behaviour change.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase active travel (walking and cycling) and improve the transport infrastructure in the Vale through the use of Welsh Government grants to improve access, safety and the joining up of the active travel network.</li> <li>• Expand the Nextbike e-cycle hire scheme into other parts of the Vale following on from the implementation of the scheme in the Penarth area.</li> <li>• Work with all schools to ensure they have green travel plans and adequate cycling facilities.</li> <li>• Establish a network of Electric Vehicle Charging Points and support projects which promote alternatively fuelled vehicles.</li> </ul>
<p>Work with partners and business to develop and implement an <b>Economic Growth Strategy</b> that supports local business and meets the challenge of climate change and our ambition for a green recovery from the Coronavirus pandemic.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and implement a sustainable and green Economic Growth Strategy.</li> <li>• Support increased digital access and literacy in the community.</li> <li>• Support employment opportunities linked to a green economy and work with the Cardiff Capital Region to explore green jobs growth potential in areas such as renewables.</li> <li>• Work with businesses, colleges and universities to identify opportunities and promote new technology.</li> </ul>
<p>Support and advocate for more <b>sustainable local food systems</b> leading to fewer food miles, less waste and greater awareness about the impact of our food choices on the environment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work through the PSB and Food Vale to implement the Move More Eat Well Plan and to promote buying local produce and shopping locally.</li> <li>• Work within Food Vale to obtain Sustainable Food City status and promote businesses that have sustainable practices</li> <li>• The Big Fresh Catering Company which serves nearly 2 million meals a year will</li> </ul>

	<p>take steps to further reduce its impact on the environment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review procurement arrangements to support less food miles and less packaging and waste.</li> <li>• Work with community groups and through the Green Infrastructure Plan to encourage people to grow their own fruit and vegetables.</li> <li>• Promote and facilitate food waste recycling for residents, business and schools.</li> </ul>
<p>Reduce <b>waste</b> and put in place the necessary facilities, services and awareness raising for a more circular economy with a strong emphasis on reuse, repair and recycling.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adopt a new Waste Management Strategy with a strong emphasis on working with the community.</li> <li>• Develop campaigns to change behaviour e.g. to reduce single use plastics and packaging and to increase reuse, recycling and composting.</li> <li>• Promote and signpost to community projects and services which encourage reuse and repair and a reduction in waste.</li> <li>• Establish a Reuse Shop to take in products, repair as necessary and sell them on.</li> <li>• Roll out of recycling arrangements across the Vale and work with schools and business to reduce waste and improve recycling rates.</li> <li>• Build a new Resource Recovery Centre in the Western Vale.</li> <li>• Commit to avoiding the export of any residual waste or recycling materials from the UK.</li> </ul>
<p>Work with partners to reduce the risk of flooding, manage our <b>coastline</b> and encourage everyone to take a more responsible approach to <b>water use</b>.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement a Flood Risk Management Plan and a Shoreline Management Plan.</li> <li>• Ensure Sustainable Urban Drainage measures are delivered.</li> <li>• Promote water efficiency measures in our work and buildings.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage the re-use of rainwater where possible.</li> </ul>
Reduce the amount of <b>energy</b> we all use and lead by example sourcing our energy from clean and renewable sources and working across all sectors to bring new technology, innovation and investment to the Vale.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and implement a Local Area Energy Plan and contribute to the work of the Cardiff Capital Region.</li> <li>• Work with developers and businesses to move away from fossil fuels and explore opportunities for investment in alternative energy supplies.</li> <li>• Support community renewable energy projects and develop district heating networks.</li> <li>• Provide information about being more energy efficient in the home including raising awareness about grants and schemes for homeowners and tenants.</li> </ul>
<b>Make a Difference</b>	
<p>These challenges focus on how the Council as an organisation provides its services and manages its assets. The proposed activities relate to our procurement practices, schools and council housing, how we manage our land and assets, staff travel and investment in technology.</p>	
<b>Our challenges are to:</b>	<b>Steps we will take:</b>
Revise our <b>Contract Management</b> and <b>Procurement</b> policies and practices to ensure they support our ambition to reduce waste and carbon emissions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revise the procurement policy and strategy and train staff on more sustainable procurement to reduce consumption and encourage a circular economy.</li> <li>• Explore social and environmental clauses in contracts which place an increased focus on local supply chains and business, with a commitment to supporting the foundation economy.</li> </ul>
Invest in our existing <b>housing</b> stock to make it more energy efficient and deliver near zero carbon, or at a minimum A rated new Council homes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver near zero carbon, or at a minimum A-rated new Council homes.</li> <li>• Improve the energy efficiency of the Council housing stock and utilise Optimised Retrofit Programmes that include Modern Methods of Construction and off-site</li> </ul>

	<p>manufacturing to meet carbon reduction targets.</p>
<p>Build new <b>zero carbon schools</b> and improve our existing school buildings to ensure they are energy efficient and create learning environments fit for the future.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invest in carbon reduction measures across the educational estate.</li> <li>• Design new schools to meet BREEAM Excellent standard, delivering energy efficient buildings, enhancing habitats for wildlife, and reducing the carbon cost of construction.</li> <li>• Monitor and control carbon footprint at the construction stage and investigate options to address embodied carbon through natural materials and modern methods of construction.</li> <li>• Adopt a fabric first approach to achieve high thermal performance and install photovoltaic panels and/or air source heat pumps.</li> <li>• Improve school grounds biodiversity as a means of decarbonisation and map natural carbon sinks.</li> <li>• Focus on methods to further reduce in-use consumption; e.g. reducing catering, monitoring community usage.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Manage and use our land, buildings and other assets</b> to support work to tackle climate change, rationalising what we need and improving sustainability and energy efficiency.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review the Asset Management Strategy.</li> <li>• Progress the Space Project to modernise and rationalise Council buildings including the creation of more green areas.</li> <li>• Invest in and implement a programme of energy saving projects to reduce energy use across our buildings as part of the carbon management plan.</li> <li>• Maximise the potential of Council owned land and assets in the production of renewable energy and exploring ways in which this could benefit the local community.</li> <li>• Encourage leaseholders to be more sustainable in how they use property leased from the Council.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement plans to convert more street lighting and de-illuminate bollards.</li> </ul>
Reduce the number of <b>car journeys</b> staff make and increase the number of <b>electric/low carbon vehicles</b> across the Council's fleet of vehicles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop an electric /alternative fuelled vehicle strategy.</li> <li>• Promote and incentivise more sustainable staff travel including corporate membership for Nextbike, pool bikes, local bus services and TfW rail service with reduced charges for staff, non-car parking days for staff and a cycle to work scheme.</li> <li>• Develop hub facilities for staff to work from to reduce the need to travel.</li> </ul>
Invest in <b>technology</b> to support homeworking and online services reducing the need for travel and office space.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utilise new technologies and digital practices to reduce electricity usage and reduce carbon emissions.</li> <li>• Implement a new Digital strategy to support increased use of technology and a reduction in office space and travel.</li> </ul>

## How Project Zero works

The previous section sets out the challenges we need to meet and provides context for where we are in responding to the emergency.

Integration is key to successfully delivering **Project Zero**. The Council provides a wide range of services and all of these will have a role to play in the project.

## Our Plans, Policies and Strategies

The Council also has a range of plans, policies and strategies in place that detail how particular services will be developed and delivered. In setting out our commitments and challenges as part of **Project Zero** we need to reflect on the progress already made and ensure that across the Council's many different plans and strategies that there is a consistent and ambitious approach to tackling climate change. Detailed below are some of the key Council strategies, policies and plans that will have a critical role in our work to adapt to and to mitigate the impact of climate change. These plans and strategies will shape how the Council acts but will also inform and influence the behaviour and actions of others.

- Corporate Plan 2020-25 'Working Together for a Brighter Future'
- Annual Delivery Plan
- HR Strategy

- COVID-19 Recovery Strategy
- Reshaping Strategy & Programme
- Corporate Asset Management Plan
- Carbon Management Plan
- Digital Strategy
- Income Generation & Commercial Opportunities Strategy
- Procurement Policy and Strategy
- 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme
- Economic Growth Strategy (in development)
- Local Housing Strategy
- Local Transport Plan (LTP) 2015-30
- Active Travel projects
- Local Development Plan 2011-26
- Relevant Supplementary Planning Guidance
- Green Infrastructure Strategy (in development)
- Biodiversity Forward Plan
- Flood Risk Management Strategy
- Shoreline Management Plan

## Our Insight

If we are to successfully meet the challenge of tackling climate change then it is critical that across the Council expertise is developed and shared. Training will be provided to Members and staff regarding specific issues such as carbon literacy as well as general awareness raising. The Council will invite professionals from within the organisation and from partner organisations to assist in the development of our knowledge and understanding of the potential negative impact of our actions and where we can make the most positive changes and progress work to be carbon neutral.

We will also utilise online modules for training and share resources with other agencies. There will be a clear message that making the changes to become carbon neutral by 2030 is the responsibility of all elected Members and staff and we can all make a difference and be part of **Project Zero**.

We will engage external expertise to work with us to inform how we can further develop our insight and evidence base to inform our decision making and report progress. This will include using the [Welsh Public Sector net zero carbon reporting guide](#) published in May 2021 and working with partners such as Natural Resources Wales who have undertaken considerable work in this area.

This will improve our accountability and provide the intelligence needed to guide our progress and highlight where action is needed and our priorities for achieving our target of being carbon neutral by 2030. We will share this information with the community and partners as part of our work to bring about change across the Vale by individuals, communities, business and the public sector.

## Our Focus on Engagement

In December 2020 an [open letter](#) from the Leader of the Council was published explaining that despite the pandemic, work to tackle climate change has continued and recognising that we still need to do more. This letter hailed the start of a conversation on climate change and the Council will keep this conversation going. It is important that as a Council we continue to keep the public and our partners informed about what we are doing, and it is important that we continue to listen to different ideas and to what our residents and other stakeholders have to say.

Our work to date has been informed by engagement with partners, staff across the Council, discussions with young people as part of work with the Public Services Board and the community conversation we started in December 2020. We recognise that to bring about the necessary changes by 2030 we need to act now but we also need to talk, to share, to listen and learn and to encourage and support each other. The consultation undertaken on the draft plan has highlighted the importance of sharing information and listening to what the public and partners think, hearing their concerns and exploring how we can work together.

We will continue to work with our schools and youth service to listen to the concerns of children and young people to share our ideas for change and to listen to theirs. We will also talk to older members of the community and learn from their knowledge and experience. We want to work with our partners including Town and Community Councils and the voluntary sector and bring all the information together to shape our actions and behaviour.

We need to build momentum behind this work and forums for discussion and constructive challenge. This is our Vale and we need to work together to safeguard its future and to leave a legacy for future generations that we can be proud of. A legacy for the next generation and beyond.

## Governance Arrangements

Our work on climate change is integral to the Council's transformation programme and one of the key drivers. Change will be required across the Council to meet the challenges of **Project Zero**. The Council's work to tackle climate change will be included in a wide range of reports including quarterly performance reports, the Council and PSB Annual Reports and regular reports to Cabinet and Scrutiny.

The development and delivery of work to tackle climate change will be overseen by the Council's Reshaping Board which includes Cabinet members and the Senior Leadership Team. The Council's Insight Board will also have a critical role in shaping work, making connections and identifying opportunities as part of **Project Zero**. In addition, technical staff will be engaged in work not just at an operational level but to bring their professional expertise to innovation sessions. External expertise and challenge will continue to be brought in to assist with developing projects to tackle the climate emergency and stimulate debate and discussion to transform how we work.

There will be different opportunities for staff to continue to engage with this work whatever their role. We will continue to hold learning cafes on different themes, and these will run in parallel with wider public engagement and discussions with different stakeholder groups. We will continue to work with partners through the PSB to deliver the commitments in the PSB Climate Emergency Charter and to support each other and challenge progress as necessary.

The Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee and the Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committees in particular will both have a role in scrutinising progress in meeting the challenges to tackle climate change and deliver **Project Zero**.

The Council has a number of performance indicators which will help determine progress in responding to the climate emergency and being carbon neutral by 2030. These are reported quarterly as part of the Council's performance management arrangements. We will build on these indicators to develop a suite of indicators and robust arrangements to demonstrate progress and the difference we are making and to inform regular reviews of **Project Zero**.

We believe the key to success is to embed the work of **Project Zero** across all our services and to make this a Council wide and a community wide effort. **Project Zero** is an integral part of our transformation programme. Involvement, collaboration and integration are essential if we are to achieve our goals and prevention and a long-term view are necessities. This work will be woven into our integrated business management arrangements which are overseen by our Insight Board ensuring that there is strong leadership and accountability and that across the Council we work together to make the changes for a brighter future.

## Appendix A - The Case for Change

There is a wide range of evidence which supports the need for change and the urgent need to respond to climate change.

Climate change is caused by a build-up of greenhouse gases in the earth's atmosphere which leads to a rise in the earth's temperature. As global temperatures continue to rise this means a range of damaging consequences including heatwaves, more intense rainfall and the oceans will continue to warm and acidify and sea levels will rise. Severe, and irreversible impacts on people and ecosystems are also more likely and globally, there will be more shortages of food and water and increased coastal flooding.

Carbon dioxide is the most abundant greenhouse gas and accounts for about two thirds of greenhouse gases and is largely the product of burning fossil fuels. We need to reduce our carbon emissions in order to reduce temperature rises.

- At 1.5°C, over 70% of coral reefs will die, but at 2°C, all reefs over 99% will be lost.
- Insects, vital for pollination of crops and plants, are likely to lose half of their habitat at 1.5°C but this becomes almost twice as likely at 2°C.
- The Arctic Ocean being completely bare of sea ice in the summer would be a once per century likelihood at 1.5°C but this leaps to a once a decade likelihood at 2°C.
- Over 6 million people currently live in coastal areas vulnerable to sea-level rise at 1.5°C, and at 2°C, this would affect 10 million people by the end of this century.
- Sea-level rise will be 100 centimetres higher at 2°C than at 1.5°C.
- The frequency and intensity of droughts, storms and extreme weather events are increasingly likely above 1.5°C

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change



It is important that we consider how the decisions and actions we all take can make a difference. Action we take now to change our behaviour and reduce our carbon emissions as part of collective global action does count. The global sea level rose around 8 inches (20 centimetres) in the last century, that's around half the height of a bowling pin. The rate in the last two decades, is nearly double that of the last century and accelerating slightly every year. Throwaway plastic packaging makes-up 40% of the demand for plastic, fuelling a boom in production from 2 million tonnes in the 1950s to 380 million tonnes in 2015. By the end of 2015, 8.3 billion tonnes of plastic had been produced – two thirds of which has been released into the environment and remains there.

## What does this mean for the UK and Wales?

The UK Climate Projections (UKCP) provides the most up to date assessment of how the UK climate may change in the future. UKCP18 sets out the weather the UK can expect to experience in a warming climate. The impacts can be summarised as wetter winters, warmer summers, increased incidence of storms and extreme weather and rising sea levels.

According to the Met Office, 2019 was the 12th warmest year for the UK since records in 1884 and all of the top 10 warmest years for the UK since records in 1884 have occurred since 2002.

The Climate Change Risk Assessment summary for Wales identifies key risk areas, where more action is needed:

- Risks to infrastructure (from all sources of flooding).
- Risks to public water supplies from drought and low flows.
- Some land management practices exacerbating flood risk.
- Risks to ecosystems and agriculture businesses from changes in climatic conditions.

The UK Committee for Climate Change's climate risk assessment identified the key trends and patterns which have been observed in the UK and Wales, where the data can be broken down:

- Similar to the UK trend as a whole, average temperatures over land have warmed in recent decades in Wales.
- At the UK level daily maximum and minimum temperature extremes have increased by just over 1°C since the 1950s.
- There are no significant recorded changes in number of days of air frost in Wales.
- Average annual rainfall over Wales has not changed significantly to date.
- There is some evidence however that heavy seasonal rainfall events have also increased across the UK.
- There has been a significant decrease in the number of days people need to heat their homes, whilst the number of days for cooling has remained unchanged.
- Sea level trends are difficult to break down for Wales. But UK-scale best estimate of  $1.4 \pm 0.2$  mm/yr for sea level rise since 1901

Prosperity for All A Climate Conscious Wales 2019 Welsh Government



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

In 2020 Natural Resources Wales published a series of seven Area Statements covering the whole of Wales. Each Area Statement outlines the key challenges facing that particular locality, what we can all do to meet those challenges, and how we can better manage our natural resources for the benefit of future generations. These statements provide a valuable insight into the issues within different regional areas and the Vale of Glamorgan is included in the South Central Wales Area Statement together with Bridgend, Cardiff, Merthyr and Rhondda Cynon Taf.

[South Central Wales Area Statement](#)

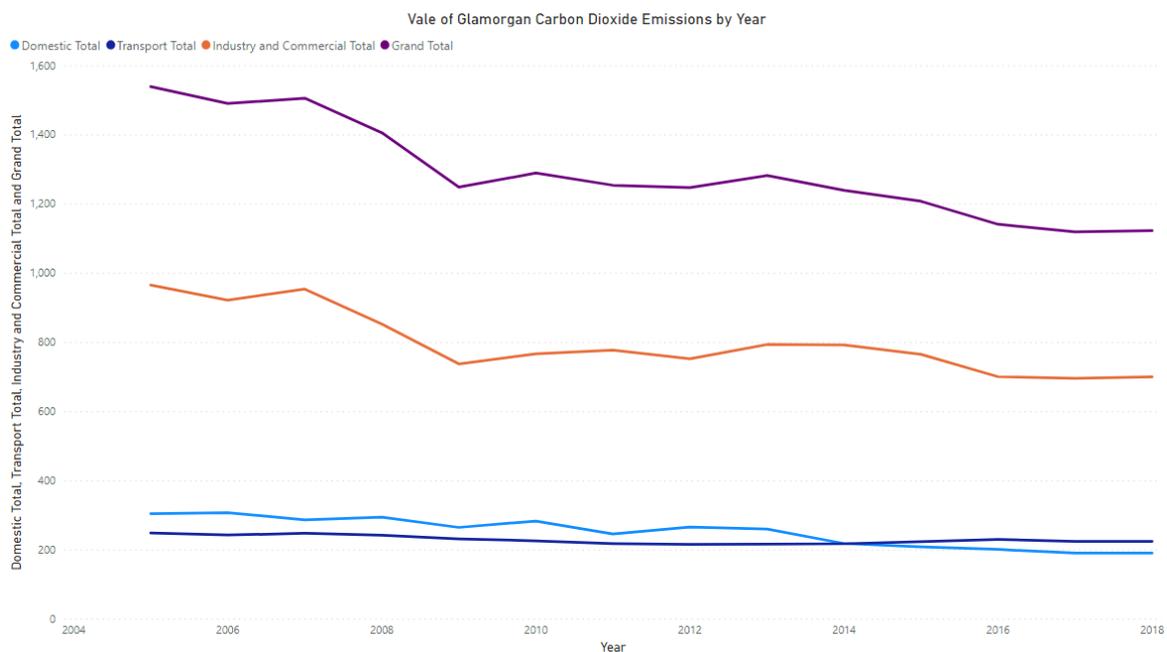
The statement is divided into a number of themes and **Building resilient ecosystems** and **Connecting people with nature** represent the cornerstones of the Area Statement, underpinning NRW's entire approach to addressing the challenges that we, and our natural environment, now face.

NRW have also published the Second State of Natural Resources Report (SoNaRR2020) which focuses on the management of natural resources within eight broad eco systems. The report builds on a number of Welsh, UK and global assessments of the status and trends of natural resources. It proposes a transformational approach using the ecosystem, economic and social spheres as levers to redesign our society and economy. Three areas of transformative change are identified, these are our food, energy and transport systems.

[State of Natural Resources Report for Wales 2020](#)

### Climate Change across the Vale

Climate change is affecting lives in the Vale and it is important that individuals, business and the public sector all play a part in reducing our emissions and changing behaviour. The Vale of Glamorgan has beautiful countryside and coastal areas but we also have significant industry, agriculture and an airport. The graph below shows the CO2 emissions for the Vale of Glamorgan as measured by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy.



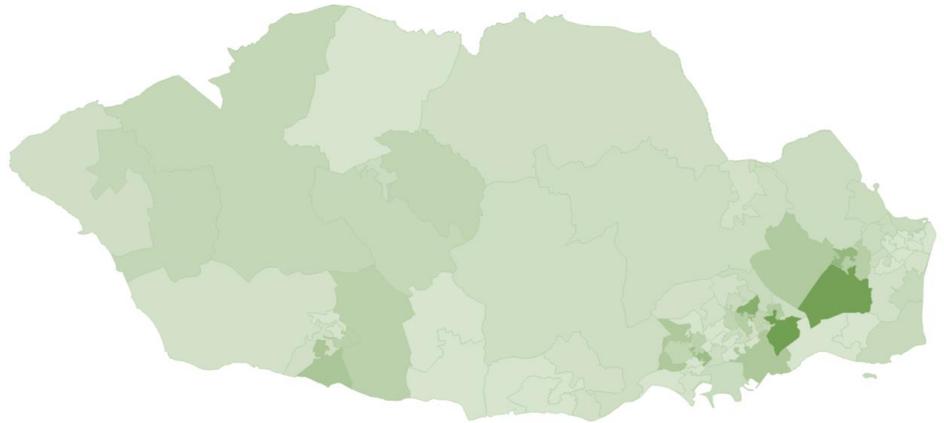
There are also inequalities across the Vale with a number of areas featuring in the top 10% of the most deprived areas in Wales according to the Wales Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD).

Climate change and poverty are connected as climate change disproportionately affects poor people in low-income communities. The IPCC Fourth National Climate Assessment Report found that low-income individuals and communities are more exposed to environmental hazards and pollution and have a harder time recovering from the impacts of climate change.

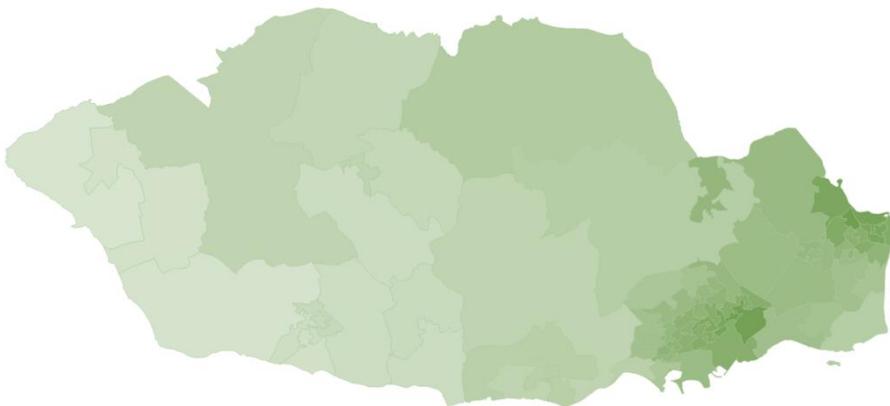
The maps below show the areas of the Vale most at risk from flooding and also the impact of air pollution. More information about WIMD can be accessed [here](#).

As measured by the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) 2019, using data from NRW's Flood Risk Assessment, a number of LSOAs in the East of the Vale of Glamorgan are measured as having a heightened risk of flooding; in particular there is a heightened risk of flooding in Dinas Powys 4 LSOA and Cadoc 5 LSOA.

Households at Risk of Flooding by LSOA



Air Quality Levels By LSOA



As measured by the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) 2019, Air Quality data by LSOA shows higher concentrations of Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) particulate matter in the East of the Vale of Glamorgan, with Cornerswell 2 LSOA recording the highest rates of NO<sub>2</sub> pollutant. Higher levels are also observed in the East of Barry, and LSOAs ranked as more deprived by WIMD. Higher rates of air pollutant in these areas may be attributed to higher population densities, traffic volumes and a proximity to heavy industry.

### **Council's Carbon Emissions**

We are reducing our emissions from our buildings, including schools and also from street lighting and travel.

The Council has been actively managing its energy consumption for some time and between 2010 and 2018 reported its emissions through the Carbon Reduction Commitment (CRC). This scheme was introduced by the government and required companies and public bodies whose emissions were over the threshold for participating to collect and measure CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from the majority of its gas and electricity supplies.

During this period the carbon emissions produced reduced from 17,700 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub> to 7,880 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>. Some of the reduction is due to the “greening of the grid” as more renewable energy is connected to the grid the emissions factor used to report CO<sub>2</sub> improves. However the Council also reduced the KWH of energy (Gas and Electricity) it consumed through this period from 29.3 Million KWH to 14.8 Million Kwh.

The figures for 2019/20 show a continued reduction to 7,539 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>. 2020/21 will be an abnormal year due to the reduced occupancy within buildings, however at the time of writing the Council is predicting a 10% reduction in emissions.

### *Schools*

We have made significant progress in improving energy efficiency in our school buildings. We have improved schools Display Energy Certificate (DEC) rating since 2012-13 and there are now no schools with a rating below D. The percentage in grade D has also dropped from 47% (in 2012-13) to 12% (in 2019-20). More schools have also moved into grade C (67% in 2019-20 compared to 44% in 2012-13) and B (21% in 2019-20 compared to 6% in 2012-13). Our aim is to continue to improve the energy efficiency of our school buildings and to reduce our carbon emissions. A decarbonisation working group project has been established to reduce energy consumption of our educational estate by 5% over the next 5 years. This will result in annual carbon savings of around 207,553.68 kgCO<sub>2</sub>e, equivalent to £60,900.

### *Council Housing*

Significant progress has also been made in improving the energy efficiency of our housing stock. The Council currently conducts a whole house assessment to understand what the most cost-effective solution for each individual property is; looking at fabric, services and renewables in order to achieve highest performance, whilst managing fuel poverty. At present the Housing Revenue Account business plan identifies approximately £103m over the next 30 years towards directly responding to decarbonisation and other renewal programmes are also seeking to achieve high levels of energy efficiency.

All our housing development schemes have been designed and built to comply with building regulations in relation to energy efficiency and Welsh Governments’ Development Quality Requirements (DQR, currently revised standards are being developed). Our objective has been to seek a 10% improvement above the minimum requirements of Part L of current Building Regulations, which controls carbon emissions and the conservation of fuel and power.

## Appendix B – Glossary of Terms

Active Travel	Walking and cycling (including the use of mobility scooters) for everyday journeys.
Air Source Heat Pump	Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHPs) absorb heat from the outside air to provide heat and hot water. They need electricity to run but because they are extracting renewable heat from the environment. The heat output is greater than the electricity input.
Big Fresh Catering Company	The Big Fresh Catering Company is wholly owned by the Council and provides food services for schools, business and events.
Biodiversity	Biodiversity is a term used to describe the enormous variety of life on Earth. Biodiversity refers to every living thing, including plants, bacteria, animals, and humans.
Blue Space	Includes rivers, watercourses, lakes and seas.
Carbon emissions	The release of carbon into the atmosphere.
Carbon Net Zero	Net zero refers to the balance between the amount of carbon produced and the amount removed from the atmosphere. We reach net zero when the amount we add is no more than the amount taken away.
Cardiff Capital Region	<a href="#">The Cardiff Capital Region (CCR)</a> City Deal is a programme agreed in 2016 between the UK Government, the Welsh Government and the ten local authorities in South East Wales to bring about significant economic growth in the region through investment, upskilling, and improved physical and digital connectivity.
Community Renewable Energy	Locally owned, locally sited renewable energy (electricity and/or heat).
Decarbonisation	A general term used to describe the process of reducing the amount of carbon used for the activity or switching to a low carbon alternative.
Eco Resilience	Eco (Ecological) resilience is generally defined as the ability of ecosystems to resist permanent structural change and maintain ecosystem function.
Food Vale	<a href="#">Food Vale</a> is a partnership of dedicated individuals, community groups, organisations and businesses working together to build a thriving, healthy and sustainable food system in the Vale.
Green Jobs	Green jobs are based on the management of renewable resources or reducing the impact on the environment.
Green Infrastructure	Green space, soil, vegetation and water that provide the ecosystem services that make places more liveable. This includes, for example, streets trees, green roofs and walls, natural play spaces, wildlife / nature gardens, pollinator corridors, landscaping, drainage and air quality management solutions.
Green Space	Areas such as woods, parks, meadows, community gardens and cemeteries.
Ground Source Heat Pump	A ground source heat pump system harnesses natural heat from underground by pumping water through it in pipes. The heat pump then

	increases the temperature, and the heat is used to provide home heating or hot water.
Greenhouse gases	Any gas that has the property of absorbing infrared radiation (net heat energy) emitted from Earth's surface and reradiating it back to Earth's surface, thus contributing to the greenhouse effect. Carbon dioxide, methane, and water vapour are the most important greenhouse gases.
Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)	The <a href="#">IPCC</a> is the United Nations body for assessing the science relating to climate change. The IPCC prepares comprehensive Assessment Reports about the state of scientific, technical and socio-economic knowledge on climate change, its impacts and future risks, and options for reducing the rate at which climate change is taking place.
Local Area Energy Plan	Local Area Energy Planning (LAEP) is a whole system approach which helps inform and support local authorities, energy network operators, businesses and communities to plan for a data-driven, cost-effective low carbon transition of the local energy system.
Optimised Retrofit Programme	A Housing department programme utilising Welsh Government grant funding to expand knowledge and improve local contractor capability in green heating services, to decarbonise the domestic heating market and provide sustainable housing with an EPC target rating of A.
Public Services Board	Public Services Boards were established as part of the Well-being of Future Generations Act. <a href="#">Our Vale - The Vale of Glamorgan Public Services Board (PSB)</a> brings together senior leaders from public and third sector organisations across the Vale of Glamorgan to work in partnership for a better future.
Renewables	Renewable energy, often referred to as clean energy, comes from natural sources or processes e.g. wind/sun.
Resource Recovery Centre	Centres for household waste including recycling. Information on centres in the Vale can be found <a href="#">here</a> .
Scrutiny	<a href="#">Scrutiny</a> is a key part of the Council's political structure and plays an important role in ensuring that the Council's services are delivered effectively, efficiently and in the interests of residents and those who work or visit the Vale of Glamorgan. Scrutiny Committees are made up from Councillors who are not on the Cabinet. These Committees are able to influence decisions that are taken by the Cabinet and provide an effective mechanism for challenge to ensure that the views and needs of the community are taken into account.
Section 106	Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 allows a local planning authority to enter into a legally-binding agreement to secure planning obligations with a landowner as part of the granting of planning permission. More information on the Section 106 agreements in the Vale can be seen <a href="#">here</a> .
Sustainable Urban Drainage	Sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS) are systems designed to efficiently manage the drainage of surface water in the urban environment.
United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)	The <a href="#">United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)</a> promotes the coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development within the United Nations system and serves as an advocate for the global environment.

Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS)	To ensure that all homes are brought up to an acceptable level, The Welsh Government has drawn up a document, the <a href="#">Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS)</a> . This is a standard for the quality and condition of properties which lists a number of targets which all homes will need to meet.
World Meteorological Organization (WMO)	The <a href="#">WMO</a> is the specialised agency of the United Nations for meteorology (weather and climate), operational hydrology and related geophysical sciences.
21 <sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme	The <a href="#">21st Century Schools Programme</a> is a long term strategic investment in educational estate throughout Wales. It is a unique collaboration between Welsh Government, the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA), local authorities, colleges and diocesan authorities.

## BACKGROUND

This report looks at the findings from the consultation undertaken on the Project Zero draft Challenge Plan from March - May 2021 to explore if the challenges identified were correct, ambitious enough and effective enough. Although the consultation on the draft plan has now closed, as part of Project Zero there will be an ongoing conversation with local partners and the public as we recognise we must all make changes, as organisations and individuals to ensure the response is effective.

The feedback received through the various consultation methods used has been analysed and where appropriate changes have been made to the final Challenge Plan. Suggestions for future actions and areas of future concern have been recorded and shared with officers to explore the potential for future opportunities.

## WHO WE'VE ENGAGED WITH

This year due to COVID-19 restrictions we have not been able to utilise all our traditional methods of engagement. Despite these challenges the consultation and engagement feedback used to inform the development of the Challenge Plan involved various stakeholders, partners and organisations as shown below:



# METHODOLOGY

The consultation period on the draft plan took place from March 23 to May 11, 2021. Due to coronavirus restrictions, the consultation was run digitally. There were several methods feedback could be provided through that were promoted by press releases, social media and direct emails to networks.

These include:

- an online survey
- online public Zoom sessions
- online Vale 50+ Strategy Forum and Vale Youth Service sessions
- online public Twitter polls
- social media conversation
- project email address

The various methods generated provided different opportunities for people to engage. The survey enabled people to consider and respond on the Plan as a whole, the Zoom sessions explored key topics in more detail and the Twitter polls enabled us to reach a wider audience and undertake pulse checks on different issues. The findings from the closed questions asked in the survey are available in Appendix A. The results from the Twitter polls are available in Appendix B.

In addition to the feedback received via the survey, online discussions and social media a number of partners and members of the public also took the opportunity to provide feedback via email. These included letters from the Cardiff and Vale UHB and Natural Resources Wales, detailed comments on certain aspects of the Plan and requests for the Council to engage with different groups within the community. These have all been taken into account and relevant officers have continued to engage with all those contacting the Council for more information, assistance or asking to discuss some of their ideas and concerns in more detail

The draft Plan was also considered by the Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee, Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee, Community Liaison Committee and Voluntary Sector Joint Liaison Committee. The comments from these committees have been taken into account as part of the consideration of the consultation feedback.

The following pages present the analysis and common issues and concerns received through multiple routes in the consultation process by theme. However it is recognised a number of themes are interconnected.

## ONLINE SURVEY

**132** Survey respondents

**98%** Think the Council should lead by example

## ZOOM

**6** Zoom sessions

**42** People booked a space on public sessions

**12** Council experts presented and answered questions

## TWITTER

**18** Twitter polls

**2,703** Total votes

# OVERVIEW OF KEY THEMES FROM THE CONSULTATION:

## FOOD

There was strong support for:

- Buying local produce and shopping locally
- Growing your own
- More information on the environmental impact food has e.g. production, packaging, waste, and thinking about what we eat

There is also public support for the Council to have a bigger role in encouraging people to think about their food and the impact it can have.



**73% Yes - Should the Council encourage people to think about where their food comes from and the impact of our food choices on the environment?**



**89% Buy local produce from local suppliers,  
79% Planning meals before shopping in order to reduce food waste,  
67% A more plant based diet - What changes would you commit to to reduce food miles, food waste or the impact on the environment? (multiple selection)**

## BUILDINGS

There was strong support for:

- Developing robust planning policies
- The Council working closely with developers to ensure new developments are sustainable, environmentally friendly, have access to public transport, green spaces etc
- Taking a more holistic approach to planning
- Considering materials used in new buildings and when retrofitting existing buildings

Several concerns were raised surrounding making use of and maintaining existing buildings and empty buildings.



**The existing building stock must not be forgotten.**



**83% Yes - Should building net zero carbon schools and making council homes and buildings more energy efficient be a priority for us?**

# LAND

There was strong support for:

- Developing green infrastructure
  - 92% on the Twitter poll agreed green infrastructure should be a priority for the Council
- Importance of linking to the nature emergency and importance of protecting and enhancing biodiversity, ecosystem resilience and green spaces
- Tree planting, ensuring the right trees are planted in the right locations
- More allotments and community gardens
- Opportunities to learn more about nature, planting and gardening, especially for children and within communities

Concerns were raised about flooding and coastal erosion. A number of concerns were also received regarding developments on green field sites and whether the Council could be doing more to protect them.

“ **Green space and green fields needs protecting...** ”

# WASTE

There was strong support for:

- New ideas and opportunities to encourage behaviour changes
- Working closely with community groups to promote reuse and repair including learning how to fix things
- Signposting to wider groups and services outside of the Council
- Clear information and facilities available to help encourage innovative ideas and support behaviour changes
- More information about what can be recycled and where
- Encourage the use of reusable items e.g. bags and drinking bottles
- Encouraging home composting

**65% Yes - Would you be interested in attending an event or location to help you repair items from home instead of buying new?**



**90% Yes - Would you commit to reducing your use of single use plastics?**



# TRANSPORT

There was strong support for:

- Alternative fuel vehicles
- Increasing the electric vehicle infrastructure
- Better connectivity of cycle routes
- Making cycling routes safer
- Active travel segregation
- Encouraging walking to school

Some voiced concerns on the technology used in electric vehicles and the impact the vehicles could still have on the environment. It was clear the main aim should remain on reducing the use of cars overall.

“**Desperately need safe, easy cycle routes linking towns in the Vale.**”



**79% Yes - If there were improved active travel or public transport networks do you think this is something that could change in future?**



**83% Yes - If the Council improved active and public transport networks, would you walk, cycle or use public transport more often?**

# ENERGY

There was strong support for:

- Moving away from fossil fuels
- Exploring renewable energy
- More support to help residents to become more energy efficient e.g. providing advice and opportunities
- The Council improving energy efficiency of its buildings inc. schools and housing
- Working with developers regarding requirements in new buildings

**93% Yes - Should the Council be doing more to explore new technology and innovation around energy?**



**47% No, but I want to - Have you made changes to your home to make it more energy efficient?**



**79% Yes - Have you made changes to your home to make it more energy efficient?**

# GENERAL

Several comments were also made outside of the themes presented. A summary of the most common feedback received is presented below:

- Important to have a robust evidence base
- Consideration needs to be given to the difference between the issues and needs that affect rural areas and more urban areas
- Support for the Council to be more ambitious
- Calls for the response to be fitting of an emergency
- Support for a Project Zero style approach for the Council to lead by example to encourage and support others
- Tackling the climate and nature emergencies will require a cross-sectoral and collaborative approach.
- Important to work with young people and schools



**98% Yes - Do you think the Council should lead by example in order to tackle climate change?**



**89% Yes - Should the Council lead by example to encourage others to make the changes to help tackle climate change?**



**98% Yes - Do you think the Council should consider environmental impacts when making spending decisions?**

# NEXT STEPS

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Although the consultation on the draft Challenge Plan has finished, work will continue to engage on this agenda. At present work to engage with younger people through local schools is being developed and a meeting has been arranged to engage with Town and Community Councils to explore how we can work together to tackle climate change.

The consultation has generated lots of ideas about the changes needed to reduce our carbon emissions and how we can encourage behaviour change across the Vale. The Council is grateful to all those who have taken the time to participate in the consultation exercise and to working in partnership to deliver our commitments in the Challenge Plan.

The conversation on Project Zero is ongoing and we are still keen to hear feedback and suggestions for Project Zero. The [Project Zero consultation webpage](#) remains live and residents are encouraged to continue to send comments and ideas to the email address - [projectzero@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk](mailto:projectzero@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk)

# Appendix A: Project Zero Survey - 23<sup>rd</sup> March – 11<sup>th</sup> May 2021

**132**

Responses

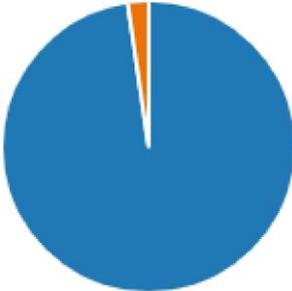
**23:58**

Average time to complete

For a number of questions more detailed answers were requested, as shown in the results below. The comments received have been considered and reflected in the report.

1. Do you think the Council should lead by example in order to tackle climate change?

● Yes	128
● No	3



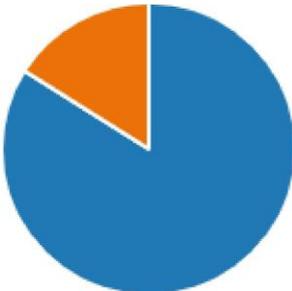
2. Would you like to explain why?

**117**

Responses

3. Do you think these are the right things to focus on?

● Yes	110
● No	21



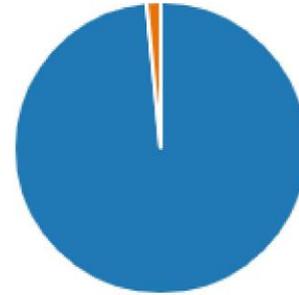
4. Would you like to explain why?

**98**

Responses

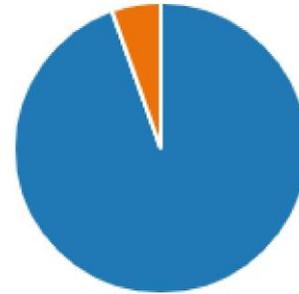
5. Do you think the Council should consider environmental impacts when making spending decisions?

Yes	128
No	2



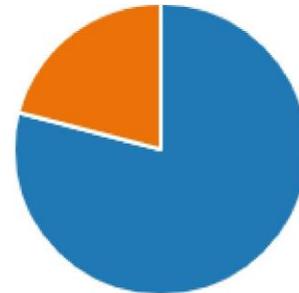
6. Do you think the Council should be doing more to explore new technology and innovation around energy?

Yes	123
No	7



7. Have you made changes to your home to make it more energy efficient?

Yes	102
No	27



8. If yes, please provide examples.

**99**

Responses

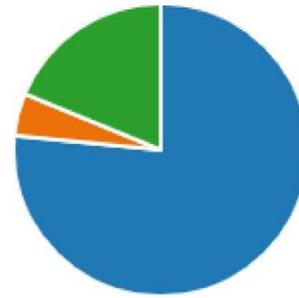
9. If no, would you like to explain why not.

**39**

Responses

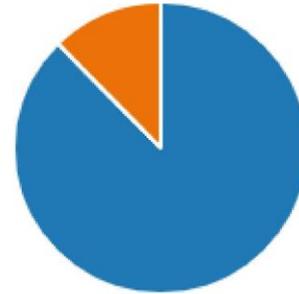
10. Do you think about the amount of water that you use?

● Yes	98
● No	6
● Sometimes	24



11. Do you know how you can be more efficient with water use?

● Yes	114
● No	16



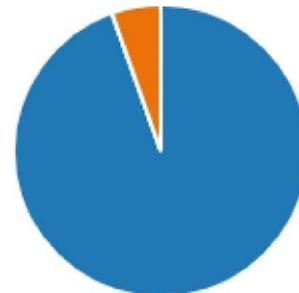
12. Do you have any other comments to add?

**53**

Responses

13. Do you think these are the right things to focus on?

● Yes	123
● No	7



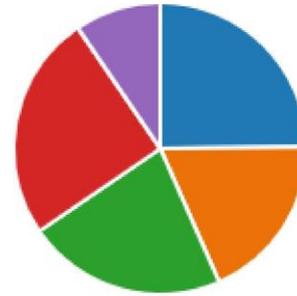
14. Would you like to explain why?

**106**

Responses

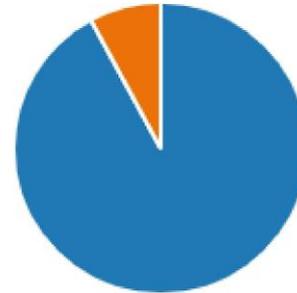
15. What changes would you commit to to reduce food miles, food waste or the impact on the environment? Please select all that apply

	Buying local produce from local suppliers	115
	A more plant based diet	86
	Planning meals before shopping in order to reduce food waste	102
	Using re-usable containers when shopping for certain products	116
	Other	44



16. Do you think these are the right things to focus on?

	Yes	117
	No	10



17. Would you like to explain why?

**103**

Responses

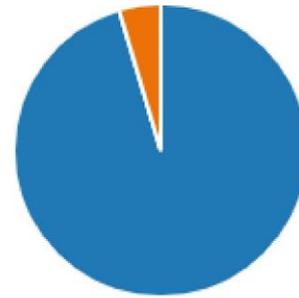
18. Are you involved in any of the following?

	Community garden project	8
	Allotment scheme	12
	'Friends of' parks group	13
	Other	26



19. Do you think these are the right things to focus on?

Yes	125
No	6



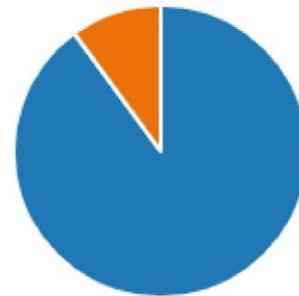
20. Which of the following do you currently do within your household? Please select all that apply.

Recycle	128
Reuse materials	115
Reduce the amount of single use plastic we buy	116
Compost	77
Other	20



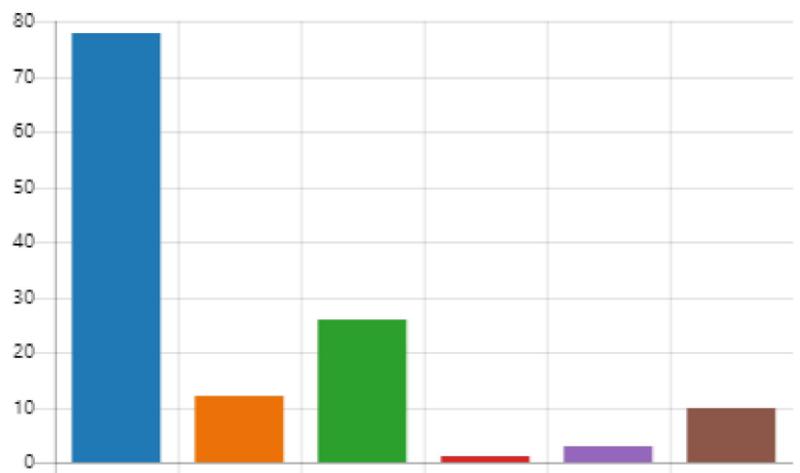
21. Do you think that these are the right things to focus on?

Yes	117
No	13



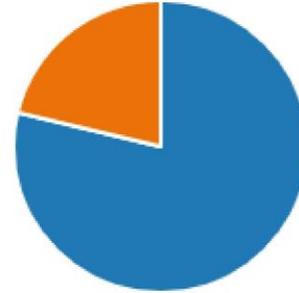
22. What mode of transport do you use predominantly?

Car	78
Cycling	12
Walking	26
Bus	3
Train	3
Other	10



23. If there were improved active travel or public transport networks do you think this is something that could change in future?

● Yes	100
● No	27



24. If yes, please provide details of the improvements needed.

**98**

Responses

25. If you had to choose one change that you think the Council should make to tackle climate change, what would it be?

**119**

Responses

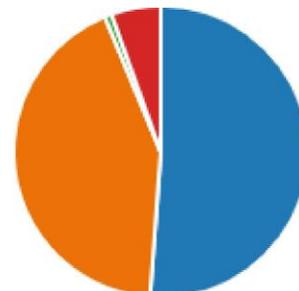
26. If you have read the Project O plan in detail, do you have any additional comments you would like to add?

**56**

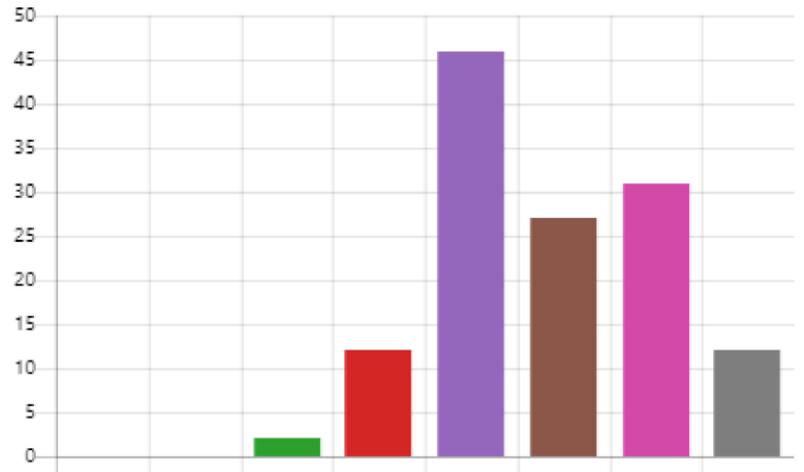
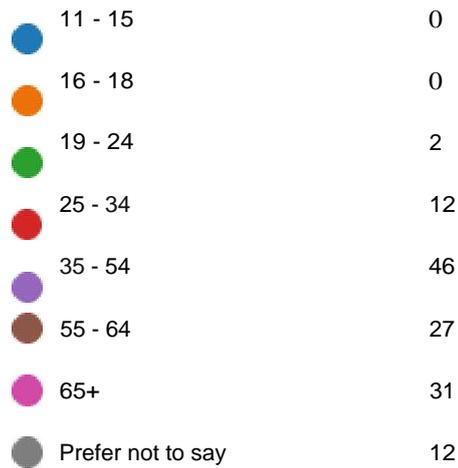
Responses

27. How would you describe your gender?

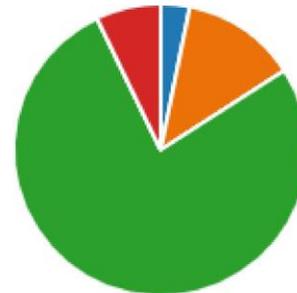
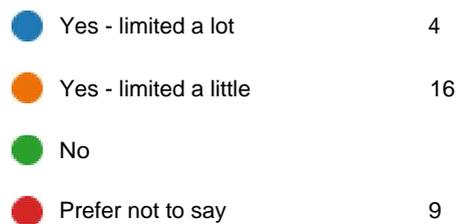
● Female	66
● Male	55
● Non-binary	
● Prefer not to say	7
● Other	0



## 28. How old are you?

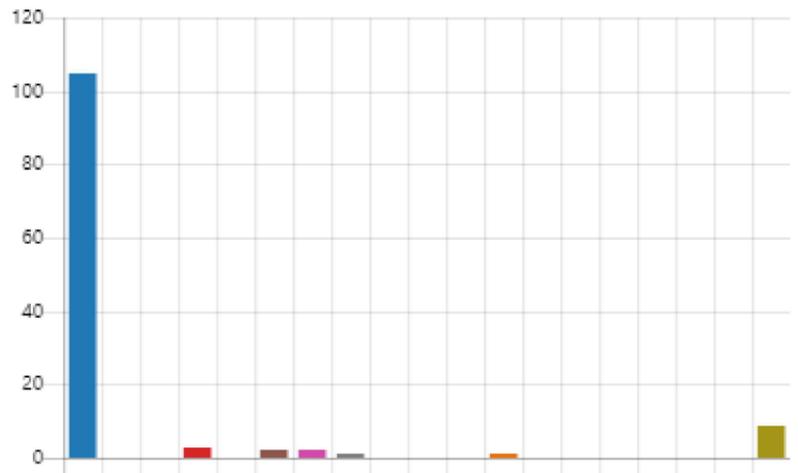


## 29. Are your day-to-day activities limited because of a physical or mental health condition, illness or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last 12 months or more?



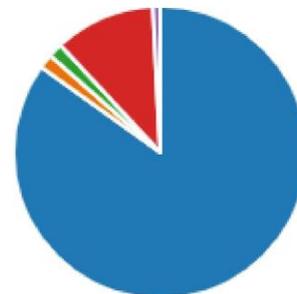
### 30. How would you describe your ethnic group?

White -Welsh/	105
White - Irish	0
White - Gypsy or Irish Traveler	0
Any other white background	3
Mixed/multiple ethnic groups ...	0
Mixed/multiple ethnic groups ...	2
Mixed/multiple ethnic groups ...	2
Any other Mixed/multiple eth...	0
Asian/Asian British - Indian	0
Asian/Asian British - Pakistani	0
Asian/Asian British - Bangladeshi	0
Asian/Asian British - Chinese	0
Any other Asian background	0
Black/African/Caribbean/Black...	0
Black/African/Caribbean/Black...	0
Any other Black/African/Carib...	0
Other ethnic group - Arab	0
Any other ethnic group	0
Prefer not to say	9



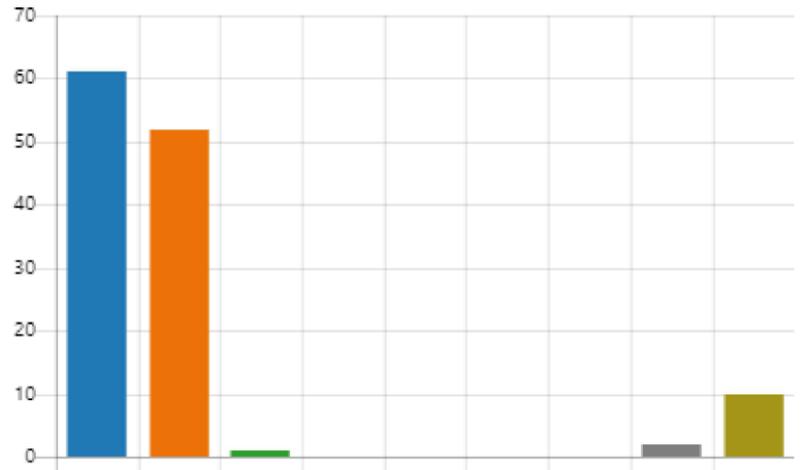
### 31. Which of the following options best describes how you think of yourself?

Heterosexual/ straight	107
Gay or lesbian	2
Bisexual	2
Prefer not to say	14
Other	0



### 32. What is your religion?

<span style="color: blue;">●</span> No religion	61
<span style="color: orange;">●</span> Christian (all denominations)	52
<span style="color: green;">●</span> Buddhist	0
<span style="color: red;">●</span> Hindu	0
<span style="color: purple;">●</span> Jewish	0
<span style="color: brown;">●</span> Muslim	0
<span style="color: pink;">●</span> Sikh	0
<span style="color: grey;">●</span> Any other religion	2
<span style="color: olive;">●</span> Prefer not to say	10



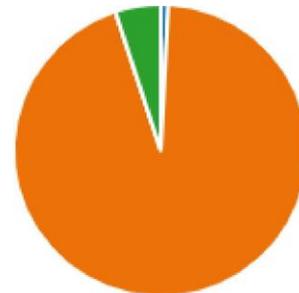
### 33. Please provide your postcode

**123**

Responses

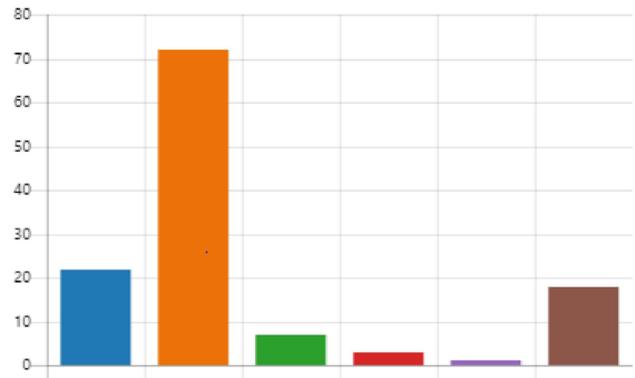
### 34. Are you currently pregnant or have you been pregnant within the last year?

<span style="color: blue;">●</span> Yes	
<span style="color: orange;">●</span> No	113
<span style="color: green;">●</span> Prefer not to say	6

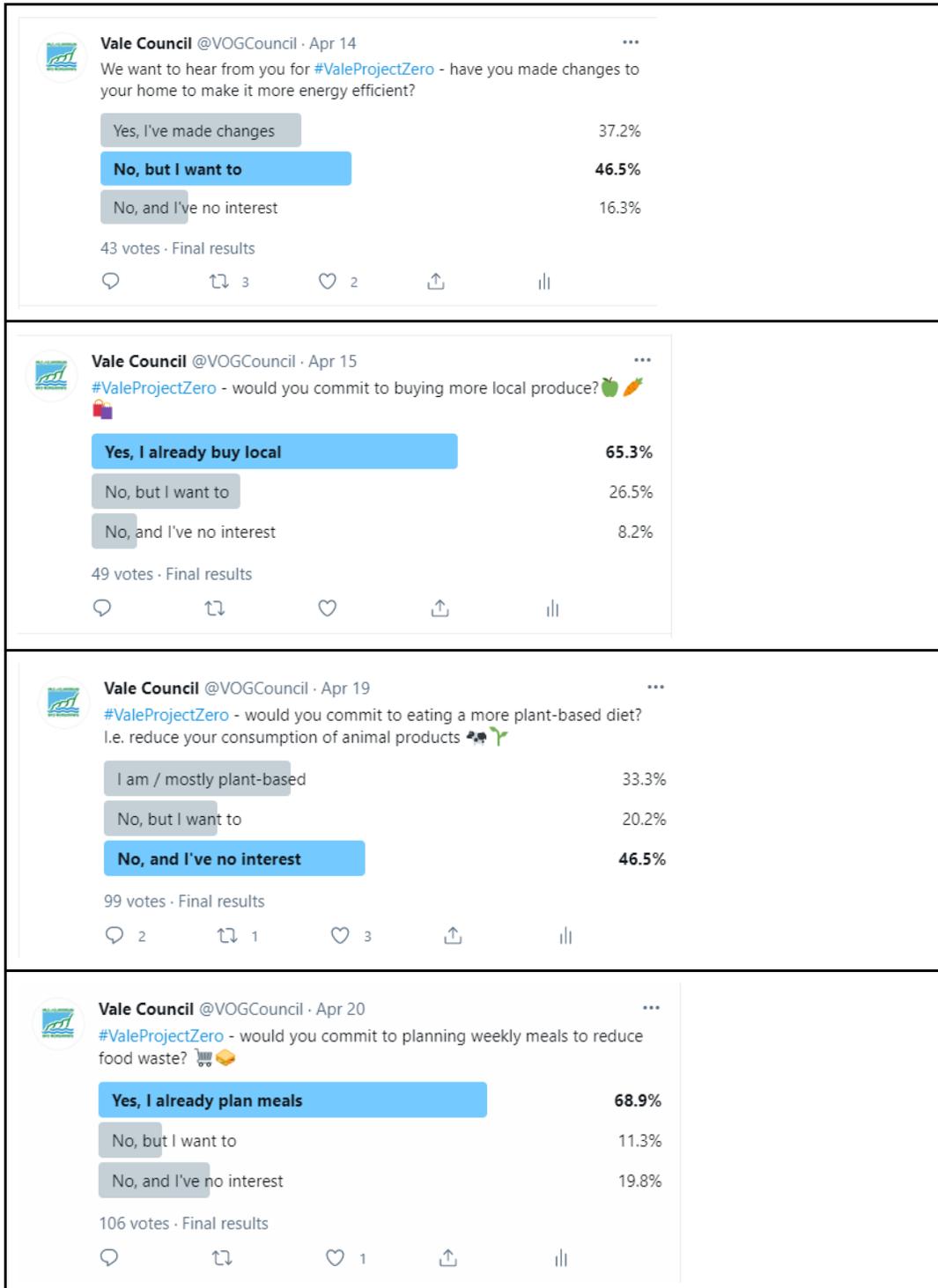


### 35. What is your legal marital status?

Single	22
Married	72
Divorced	7
Widowed	3
In a registered same-sex civil Marriage	1
Prefer not to say	18



# Appendix B: Project Zero Twitter Polls



**Vale Council** @VOGCouncil · Apr 22

#ValeProjectZero - would you commit to using reusable containers or packaging for your food shopping to reduce waste? 🍷🍷

<b>I already use reusable</b>	<b>43.1%</b>
<b>No, but I want to</b>	<b>43.1%</b>
No, and I've no interest	13.9%

72 votes · Final results

1 1 1 1 1

**Vale Council** @VOGCouncil · Apr 23

#ValeProjectZero are you part of a community garden project or a similar nature project? 🌻🌿

Yes, I'm already a member	8.3%
<b>Not yet, but I'd like to</b>	<b>45.8%</b>
<b>No, and I've no interest</b>	<b>45.8%</b>

48 votes · Final results

2 1 1 1 1

**Vale Council** @VOGCouncil · Apr 26

#ValeProjectZero Would you be interested in attending an event or location to help you repair items from home instead of buying new?

<b>Yes, I'd be interested</b>	<b>65%</b>
No	35%

60 votes · Final results

1 3 4 1 1

**Vale Council** @VOGCouncil

#ValeProjectZero Would you commit to reducing your use of single use plastics? 🗑️

<b>Yes</b>	<b>90%</b>
No	10%

80 votes · Final results

3:56 PM · Apr 28, 2021 · Twitter Web App

**Vale Council** @VOGCouncil · Apr 29

Do you compost your waste at home? 🥕🌱

Yes	32.2%
<b>No</b>	<b>67.8%</b>

264 votes · Final results

5 1 1 1 1

**Vale Council** @VOGCouncil · Apr 30 ...

#ValeProjectZero Which mode of transport do you use most? 🚲🚌

Public transport i.e. bus	5%
<b>Car</b>	<b>71.7%</b>
Walking	20%
Cycling	3.3%

60 votes · Final results

🗨️ ↻️ ❤️ 📤 📊

**Vale Council** @VOGCouncil · May 5 ...

Should the Council lead by example to encourage others to make the changes to help tackle climate change? 🌍👏

<b>Yes</b>	<b>88.5%</b>
No	11.5%

217 votes · Final results

🗨️ 4 ↻️ 3 ❤️ 1 📤 📊

**Vale Council** @VOGCouncil · May 6 ...

Should building net zero carbon schools and making council homes and buildings more energy efficient be a priority for us? 🏫🏠

<b>Yes</b>	<b>83.1%</b>
No	16.9%

225 votes · Final results

🗨️ 9 ↻️ 1 ❤️ 📤 📊

**Vale Council** @VOGCouncil · May 6 ...

Should the Council consider environmental impacts when making spending decisions? 💰🌍

<b>Yes</b>	<b>92.3%</b>
No	7.7%

104 votes · Final results

🗨️ 2 ↻️ ❤️ 1 📤 📊

**Vale Council** @VOGCouncil

Should the Council be doing more to explore new technology and innovation around energy? 🧑🏻💡

Yes	92.8%
No	7.2%

166 votes · Final results

9:51 AM · May 7, 2021 · Twitter Web App

**Vale Council** @VOGCouncil · May 7

Should the Council encourage people to think about where their food comes from and the impact of our food choices on the environment? 🍌🌱

Yes	72.9%
No	27.1%

85 votes · Final results

**Vale Council** @VOGCouncil

Should Green Infrastructure i.e. increasing tree planting, sustainable drainage, allotments, community garden spaces and biodiversity planting be a priority for us? 🌳

Yes	91.9%
No	8.1%

296 votes · Final results

**Vale Council** @VOGCouncil · May 10

Should we aim to increase household recycling rates via better recycling facilities? As well as raising awareness of circular economies, reduce/reuse/recycle etc? ♻️

Yes	86.7%
No	13.3%

286 votes · Final results



**Vale Council** @VOGCouncil · May 11

...

If the Council improved active and public transport networks, would you walk, cycle or use public transport more often? 🚶🚲🚌



443 votes · Final results

🗨️ 14    ↻ 10    ❤️ 4    📤    📊

CABINET 5<sup>th</sup> JULY 2021 – PROJECT ZERO – DRAFT CLIMATE CHANGE CHALLENGE -

EXTRACT OF THE MINUTES FROM THE ENVIRONMENT AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 15<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2021.

“PROJECT ZERO – DRAFT CLIMATE CHANGE CHALLENGE PLAN (MD) –

The Head of Policy and Business Transformation presented the report which was to enable the Committee to comment on the draft Climate Change Challenge Plan following consultation and prior to consideration by Cabinet.

In conjunction with the Strategy and Partnership Manager, the Head of Policy and Business Transformation delivered a PowerPoint presentation which provided an overview of the consultation responses and the subsequent changes to the Draft Plan.

In commenting on the Draft Plan, Councillor G. John raised concern with the number of responses (132 survey responses) which may have given an indication of the level of public interest. The Head of Policy and Business Transformation advised that in addition to the 132 survey responses, the Council also undertook twitter polls which saw hundreds of people getting involved. What was important was for the Council to have ongoing engagement with the public and take on board feedback across a range of individual consultation exercises that the Council would be running.

Councillor A.R. Robertson, raised concern with locally sourced food and encouraging people to grow their own, referring to the closure of local abattoirs and cattle markets such as Cowbridge. Councillor Robertson commented on the Council's Local Development Plan which had identified the need for ten thousand new homes to be built across the Vale. He queried what impact this would have on environmental sustainability. Councillor Robertson also asked how the Council would quantify that it had met its Carbon Dioxide reduction targets. In reply to comments regarding locally sourced foods, the Head of Policy and Business and Transformation stated that Councillor Robertson had highlighted the interconnectivity of issues associated with climate change and the way people's decisions and behaviours could make a difference. This was why there would be a mix and range of responses to support local food production and distribution. These would include encouraging retailers to source local food produce and giving people opportunity to grow their own food in community allotments which were alongside schemes like "Food Share", which would stock products from supermarkets which would otherwise have gone to waste.

Regarding cattle markets, the Head of Regeneration and Planning commented that Cowbridge cattle market had been affected by the Foot and Mouth outbreak back in the early 2000s and had been unable to meet the subsequent health and safety requirements. The Council was working with Welsh Government to facilitate solutions and looking at sites across Wales where farmers could sell their produce.

With regard to housing and the Local Development Plan (LDP), the Head of Regeneration and Planning advised that the current LDP had been adopted in 2017. The Plan had been regularly assessed and deemed to be sustainable. The Plan would be reviewed to take into consideration the level and need for housing. The Head of Regeneration and Planning added that the current level of housing need had been based on evidence, but it was fair to say that environmental sustainability was more important than ever.

In terms of measuring the level of Carbon Dioxide, the Head of Policy and Business Transformation referred to the Welsh Government document - Public Sector Net Zero Reporting Guide. The Council also had established a group of Officers to consider the guidance in more detail to gather the evidence to produce a baseline and monitor this in the coming years. This would provide an indication of the areas to prioritise activity to have the greatest impact.

Councillor S. Sivagnanam queried whether there was more work needed in making high streets more of a green space, and she wondered whether the Council could be bolder and look into more creative ideas. In reply, the Head of Regeneration and Planning stated that town centres would be a key area of concentration post Covid, with support targeted to those areas struggling the most.

Councillor A.R. Robertson wanted it placed on record, that he could not agree with the contents of the Plan, which he considered to be based on some flawed premises and which also did not go far enough to protect the environment of the Vale of Glamorgan.

Subsequently, the Committee

#### RECOMMENDED –

- (1) T H A T the revised draft Climate Change Challenge Plan attached at Appendix A, be accepted.
- (2) T H A T the feedback (Appendix B) received through the recent consultation undertaken from the 24<sup>th</sup> March to the 12<sup>th</sup> May 2021, be noted.
- (3) T H A T the ongoing engagement being undertaken as part of the work around Project Zero, be noted.
- (4) T H A T the new Welsh Public Sector net zero reporting guide issued by Welsh Government on the 24<sup>th</sup> May 2021 as described in the body of the report, be noted.

#### Reasons for recommendations

- (1) Following consideration of the draft Plan (Appendix A).
- (2) To enable the Committee to consider the feedback received in response to the consultation on the draft Plan (Appendix B).

(3) To update the Committee on the continuing engagement being undertaken as part of Project Zero.

(4) To advise Committee of the publication of the new Welsh Public Sector net zero reporting guide”.

THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL

CABINET: 5<sup>TH</sup> JULY, 2021

REFERENCE FROM CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES  
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: 16<sup>TH</sup> JUNE, 2021

“ PROJECT ZERO – DRAFT CLIMATE CHANGE CHALLENGE PLAN (MD) –

The draft Climate Change Challenge Plan attached to the report set out the Council’s response to the climate emergency and the work that would be undertaken as part of Project Zero. The draft Plan highlighted the challenges and the steps the Council proposed to take to meet the challenges and detailed some of the work already underway across the Council as part of work to adapt to and mitigate the impact of climate change. The report also detailed the consultation undertaken, resulting feedback and revisions to the Challenge Plan, as well as some of the ongoing engagement and the timetable for the Plan being approved. A PowerPoint overview presentation of the report and the Plan was provided by the Head of Policy and Business Transformation and the Strategy and Partnership Manager at the meeting.

During the consideration of the item a number of members, who had attended the Scrutiny Committee Environment and Regeneration the previous evening advised that as they had made comments at that meeting, they would not comment in detail at this meeting. Following a query from the Chair regarding the low response to the consultation the officer advised that the plan had been promoted widely through social media, the Council’s partners, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sector, Housing Associations, and businesses. Suggestions were also made that further consideration be given to ensuring future inclusivity with regard to public engagement and those that are hard to reach and that further awareness raising exercises be undertaken regarding the challenges of project zero e.g. wider biodiversity issues, the need for a growth in the bee community, other animals, types of materials that are being used for the making of school uniforms and recycling opportunities.

The Chair having regard to the Plan requested that Members receive detailed information in relation to the kilowatts generated for the 100 energy saving projects, information on ground source heat pumps, and the energy savings to LED street lights, the data on usage of electric docking stations and where situated, performance rating information for the housing retro fit programme, vehicle charging sites in schools, where are they positioned and in which schools.

In referring to street lighting the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services and Transport (NS and T) advised that the Council was continuing to replace the lights with LED lights. Having regard to the installation of docking stations the Cabinet member for NS and T referred to the need for Network Rail to provide cooperation in order for such a station to be installed at Cogan, for people to be able to travel to Llandough Hospital.

Members concurred that it was important for all agencies to work collaboratively in promoting the agenda. The Deputy Leader also commented on the importance of

partnership working advising the Committee that further reports would be presented to the Scrutiny Committee on these matters in due course.

The Head of Policy and Business Transformation in conclusion stated that the Public Services Board had launched the Climate Change Charter and took the opportunity to assure the Committee of the collective buy in for the agenda. The officer also agreed to undertake a piece of work around the measurement of carbon emissions over short, medium, and longer terms.

Having considered the report, the Scrutiny Committee subsequently

#### RECOMMENDED –

- (1) T H A T the revised draft Climate Change Challenge Plan attached at Appendix A to the report be noted and that the Committee's comments referred back to Cabinet.
- (2) T H A T the feedback (Appendix B to the report) received through the recent consultation undertaken from 24<sup>th</sup> March to 12<sup>th</sup> May, 2021 be noted.
- (3) T H A T the ongoing engagement being undertaken as part of the work around Project Zero be noted.
- (4) T H A T the new Welsh Public Sector net zero reporting guide issued by Welsh Government on 24<sup>th</sup> May, 2021 as described in the body of the report be noted.
- (5) T H A T the comments considered at the meeting as below, be referred to Cabinet and the information requested be provided to Members as appropriate :-
  - Further consideration to be given to ensuring future inclusivity with regard to public engagement and those that are hard to reach,
  - Further awareness raising exercises be undertaken regarding the challenges of project zero e.g. wider biodiversity issues, the need for a growth in the bee community, other animals, types of materials that are being used for the making of school uniforms and recycling opportunities,
  - Detailed information be provided for Members in relation to :-
    - the kilowatts generated for the 100 energy saving projects, ground source heat pumps, and the conversion to LED street lights,
    - data on usage of docking stations and where situated,
    - performance rating information for the housing retro fit programme,
    - vehicle charging sites in schools, where are they positioned and in which schools.

#### Reasons for recommendations

- (1) To enable the Committee to recommend to Cabinet any changes to the draft Plan (Appendix A to the report) prior to the Plan being considered by Council
- (2-5) Having regard to the report and discussions at the meeting.

Attached as Appendix – Report to Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny  
Committee: 16<sup>th</sup> June, 2021