

Meeting of:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	Thursday, 25 May 2023
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	Environment and Regeneration
Report Title:	Becoming a Placemaking Wales Charter Signatory and Developing Placemaking Plans
Purpose of Report:	To seek authority for the Council to sign up to the Placemaking Wales Charter and for the Council to apply for Welsh Government funding to develop Placemaking Plans for each of the four towns in the Vale of Glamorgan.
Report Owner:	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Sustainable Places
Responsible Officer:	Director of Place
Elected Member and Officer Consultation:	<p>No Elected Members have been consulted as this is not a ward specific matter.</p> <p>Director of Corporate Resources Director of Environment and Housing Head of Sustainable Development Head of Housing and Building Services Legal Services - Committee Reports Operational Manager (Accountancy) Finance Support Manager Operational Manager (Property) Team Leader (Community Development, External Grants and Funding) Team Leader (Economy & Neighbourhood Regeneration)</p>
Policy Framework:	This is a matter for Executive decision by Cabinet

Executive Summary:

The purpose of this report is to seek Cabinet's endorsement of the proposal that Vale of Glamorgan Council becomes a signatory to the Placemaking Wales Charter.

Once signed up to the Placemaking Wales Charter, the Council will be eligible to apply for Welsh Government funding to prepare Placemaking Plans for each town in the Vale of Glamorgan: Barry, Penarth, Cowbridge, and Llantwit Major.

Welsh Government has advised that future grant funding for towns will be dependent on an adopted Placemaking Plan.

Therefore, the second purpose of this report is to seek Cabinet's endorsement to apply for funding from Welsh Government, which has been specifically allocated to prepare Placemaking Plans, for the four towns in the Vale of Glamorgan.

Recommendations

1. That the proposal that Vale of Glamorgan Council becomes a signatory to the Placemaking Wales Charter be referred for consideration by Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee. Should Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee agree and have no further comments, the matter would be considered as agreed.
2. Subject to Recommendation 1, that Cabinet agrees that the Vale of Glamorgan Council becomes a signatory to the Placemaking Wales Charter.
3. Subject to Recommendation 1, that Cabinet agrees that the Vale of Glamorgan Council applies for Welsh Government funding to prepare Placemaking Plans for each of the four towns in the Vale of Glamorgan.
4. Subject to Recommendation 1, that the Director of Place (in consultation with the Head of Finance/Section 151 Officer and the Monitoring Officer/Head of Legal and Democratic Services) be authorised enter into funding / legal agreements with Welsh Government or any third parties to support the development of Placemaking Plans.

Reasons for Recommendations

1. To allow the proposal to be referred to Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee for consideration.
2. In signing the Placemaking Wales Charter the Vale of Glamorgan Council will agree to support placemaking in all relevant areas of our work and promote the six placemaking principles in the planning, design and management of new and existing places.
3. To enable the submission of funding applications and the development of Placemaking Plans.
4. To accept grant funding towards the development of placemaking plans and enter into any necessary legal agreements.

1. Background

- 1.1 Placemaking is the proactive and collaborative process of creating and managing places. *Future Wales: the National Plan 2040* and national planning policy identify placemaking as being essential to the delivery of sustainable development and achieving improvements in the well-being of communities (Planning Policy Wales edition 11 para 2.10). The Welsh Government's document *Building Better Places* (July 2020) identifies the importance of placemaking to Covid-19 pandemic recovery:

"The Covid-19 Pandemic and our collective response to the issues it raises, is one of the most complicated challenges in a generation. We have all had to do things differently...Now, more than ever, we need to think about places and placemaking. This will be our core value in the work we take forward to

bring about recovery in Wales.” (Building Better Places, July 2020 page 2 – forward by Julie James MS)

1.2 However, placemaking relates to far more than just the Council’s land use planning service. Placemaking relates to multiple service areas across the breadth of local government that contribute to the creation and management of places. It is for this reason that Cabinet is being asked to consider signing up to the Placemaking Wales Charter as a whole organisation. Other local authorities that have signed up to the Charter on an organisation-wide basis include Swansea City Council, Newport City Council, Wrexham County Borough Council, and Monmouthshire County Council. Other signatories include:

- Cadw;
- Transport for Wales;
- WLGA;
- Natural Resources Wales;
- Pobl;
- Play Wales;
- the Royal Town Planning Institute;
- the Royal Society of Architects in Wales;
- the Institute of Civil Engineers;
- the Federation of Master Builders;
- the Chartered Institute of Housing;
- the Chartered Institute of Highways and Transportation; and
- all Welsh Local Planning Authorities via the Planning Officers’ Society for Wales.

1.3 The Placemaking Charter has been developed by Welsh Government and the Design Commission for Wales in collaboration with the Placemaking Wales Partnership. The Charter builds on the strengthening focus on placemaking in policy and practice in Wales and aims to provide a common understanding of the range of considerations that go into placemaking. The Charter outlines six placemaking principles that cover the range of considerations that contribute to establishing and maintaining good places. A link to the Charter is provided in paragraph 6 Background Papers.

1.4 Placemaking Wales Charter signatories agree to promote the following principles in the planning, design and management of new and existing places:

People and Community - The local community are involved in the development of proposals. The needs, aspirations, health and well-being of all people are considered at the outset. Proposals are shaped to help to meet these needs as well as create, integrate, protect and/or enhance a sense of community and promote equality.

Location - Places grow and develop in a way that uses land efficiently, supports and enhances existing places and is well connected. The location of housing,

employment leisure and other facilities are planned to help reduce the need to travel.

Movement - Walking, cycling and public transport are prioritised to provide a choice of transport modes and avoid dependence on private vehicles. Well designed and safe active travel routes connect to the wider active travel and public transport network, and public transport stations and stops are positively integrated.

Mix of Uses - Places have a range of purposes which provide opportunities for community development, local business growth and access to jobs, services and facilities via walking, cycling or public transport. Development density and a mix of uses and tenures helps to support a diverse community and vibrant public realm.

Public Realm - Streets and public spaces are well defined, welcoming, safe and inclusive with a distinct identity. They are designed to be robust and adaptable with landscape, green infrastructure and sustainable drainage well integrated. They are well connected to existing places and promote opportunities for social interaction and a range of activities for all people.

Identity - The positive, distinctive qualities of existing places are valued and respected. The unique features and opportunities of a location, including heritage, culture, language, built and natural physical attributes, are identified and responded to.

1.5 As a signatory to the Placemaking Charter, Vale of Glamorgan Council would be pledging to support placemaking in all relevant areas of our work and promote the six placemaking principles in the planning, design, and management of new and existing places. The spirit of the partnership of one of mutual support, encouragement, and positive action. Its multi-disciplinary approach aligns well with the Council's Corporate Plan and will promote a collaborative approach and teamwork to ensure the delivery of sustainable development.

1.6 Signatories are expected to promote and uphold the principles of the Charter in all of their work:

- Involve the local community in the development of proposals
- Choose sustainable locations for new development
- Prioritise walking, cycling and public transport
- Create inclusive, well defined, safe and welcoming streets and public spaces
- Promote a sustainable mix of uses to make places vibrant
- Value and respect the positive distinctive qualities and identity of existing places

1.7 These pledges closely align to the Council's objectives of working with our communities, supporting sustainable growth and respecting and enhancing our

environment. It also aligns with the Council's [values](#) of being open, together, ambitious and proud. Becoming a signatory of the Placemaking Wales Charter will complement and endorse the Council's commitment to wellbeing and sustainable development.

1.8 In addition to the Corporate Plan, the Council is already working on a number of projects and strategies that embrace placemaking and the principles set out in the Charter. These include:

- the Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP), will help us decide what developments will and will not be permitted at different locations, and highlight areas that we need to protect for planning decisions up to 2033;
- the Climate Change Challenge Plan, which is part of Project Zero, the Council's blueprint to become carbon neutral by 2030;
- the 21st Century Schools programme, which is a collaboration between Welsh Government, the Welsh Local Government Association, and the Council, to build new or refurbish schools to meet BREEAM Excellent standard, improved facilities and access, built utilising local supply chains;
- Active travel improvements completed and underway;
- the Barry Growth Plan and Masterplan, a regeneration plan for Barry Town Centre which will become a key part of a comprehensive Placemaking Plan for Barry;
- the Barry Wayfinding scheme, a mapping and pedestrian signage project utilising the Barry design tool-kit branding, which will help connect different parts of Barry and encourage active travel;
- The Council's Corporate Asset Management Plan (2023-28) priorities;
- Green Infrastructure Strategy.

1.9 Placemaking is going to be key to ensuring our communities thrive in the current difficult economic context, post-Covid and the cost of living crisis, and ensuring that our towns have well-designed and well-maintained built and natural environments. Becoming a signatory to the Placemaking Charter therefore provides an opportunity for the Council to confirm its commitment to delivering quality places and recognising the key role that this plays in enhancing the health and well-being of its communities and residents for the long-term future.

2. Key Issues for Consideration

2.1 Becoming a signatory to the Placemaking Wales Charter is a straight forward process and would confirm the Council's commitment to delivering and maintaining quality places and its recognition of the role that good placemaking plays in enhancing the health and well-being of its communities and residents for the long-term future.

2.2 There are potential additional development costs associated with ensuring placemaking objectives are met in development proposals and in future

maintenance. However, the Charter outlines that true placemaking should not result in additional cost implications.

- 2.3** Many aspects of the Charter are covered by other legislative or policy requirements, such as the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act, the Active Travel Act, and the biodiversity enhancement duty. However, it would be a positive step to show commitment by signing up to the Charter.
- 2.4** Signing up to the Charter would allow the Council to apply for funding to produce Placemaking Plans. When applying for substantial Welsh Government grants, plans and/or strategies are required to justify the application and therefore this is an opportunity to have this necessary work funded.

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

- 3.1** Long-term – The Placemaking Wales Charter is a blue-print for creating more efficient and sustainable towns.
- 3.2** Prevention - To prevent poor development decisions or planning decisions that do not consider all of the Charter’s principles.
- 3.3** Integration – Delivering on the principles in the Charter will require an integrated approach, working with residents and businesses to develop plans and maintain places.
- 3.4** Collaboration – Both collaborating internally across Directorates and collaborating with Town Councils will be necessary to deliver good Placemaking Plans.
- 3.5** Involvement – This is an opportunity to further develop co-working relationships with Town Councils, to strengthen external partnerships with businesses, local interest groups and other key stakeholders, as well as build new relationships with external stakeholders who have not previously been involved in decision making about their place.

4. Climate Change and Nature Implications

- 4.1** No negative implications. The Placemaking Wales Charter sets out the importance of enhancing and protecting biodiversity and green infrastructure.

5. Resources and Legal Considerations

Financial

- 5.1** Grants of up to £50,000 per town will be made available and 30% match funding will be required for the delivery of the plans. Existing Town Centre Regeneration funding has been identified to cover the match funding element for each town.

Employment

5.2 There are no employment considerations with this report.

Legal (Including Equalities)

5.3 There are no legal implications associated with this report.

6. Background Papers

- Future Wales 2040: The National Plan (Feb, 2021)
<https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2021-02/future-wales-the-national-plan-2040.pdf>
- Planning Policy Wales (Edition 11, Feb 2021)
https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2021-02/planning-policy-wales-edition-11_0.pdf
- Building Better Places : The planning system delivering resilient and brighter futures (July 2020)
[Building Better Places: The Planning System delivering Resilient and Brighter Futures - placemaking and the Covid-19 recovery \(gov.wales\)](https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2021-02/building-better-places-the-planning-system-delivering-resilient-and-brighter-futures-placemaking-and-the-covid-19-recovery.pdf)
- Placemaking Guide 2020 Design Commission for Wales
[PlacemakingGuideDigitalENG.pdf \(dcfw.org\)](https://www.dcfw.org/placemaking-guide-2020)
- Place Making Charter
<http://dcfw.org/placemaking/placemaking-charter/>