

# Document Pack



Wendy Walters  
Prif Weithredwr,  
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**MONDAY, 24 JUNE 2019**

**TO: ALL MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD**

I HEREBY SUMMON YOU TO ATTEND A MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD WHICH WILL BE HELD IN THE CHAMBER, COUNTY HALL, CARMARTHEN AT 10.00 AM, ON MONDAY, 1<sup>ST</sup> JULY, 2019 FOR THE TRANSACTION OF THE BUSINESS OUTLINED ON THE ATTACHED AGENDA

*Wendy Walters*

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE**



PLEASE RECYCLE

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Ref:	AD016-001

# EXECUTIVE BOARD

## MEMBERSHIP - 10 MEMBERS

Councillor	Portfolio
<b>Emlyn Dole</b>	<b>Leader</b> Corporate Leadership and Strategy; Chair of Executive Board; Represents Council at WLGA; Economic Development Represents the Council on the Swansea Bay City Region; Collaboration; Marketing and Media; Appoints Executive Board Members; Determines EBM Portfolios; Liaises with Chief Executive; Public Service Board
<b>Mair Stephens</b>	<b>Deputy Leader</b> Council Business Manager; Human Resources; Performance Management; Wales Audit; Training; I.C.T.; T.I.C. (Transformation, Innovation and Change); Strategic Planning
<b>Cefin Campbell</b>	<b>Communities and Rural Affairs</b> Rural Affairs and Community Engagement; Community Safety; Police; Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015; Tackling Poverty; Wellbeing of Future Generations; Third Sector Liaison ;Equalities
<b>Glynog Davies</b>	<b>Education and Children</b> Schools; Children's Services; Special Education Needs; Safeguarding; Respite Homes; Regional Integrated School; Improvement Service; Adult Community Learning; Youth Services; School Catering Services, Lead Member for Children and Young People; Youth Ambassador
<b>Hazel Evans</b>	<b>Environment</b> Refuse; Street Cleansing; Highways and Transport Services; Grounds Maintenance; Building Services; Caretaking; Building Cleaning; Emergency Planning; Flooding
<b>Linda Evans</b>	<b>Housing</b> Housing – Public; Housing – Private, Ageing Well
<b>Peter Hughes Griffiths</b>	<b>Culture, Sport and Tourism</b> Town and Community Councils Ambassador; Development of the Welsh Language; Theatres; Sports; Leisure Centres; Museums; Libraries; Country Parks; Tourism.
<b>Philip Hughes</b>	<b>Public Protection</b> Trading Standards; Environmental Health. Environmental Enforcement; Planning enforcement; Unlicensed Waste; Parking Services; Bio diversity
<b>David Jenkins</b>	<b>Resources</b> Finance & Budget; Corporate Efficiencies; Property/Asset Management; Procurement; Housing Benefits; Revenues; Statutory Services (Coroners, Registrars, Electoral, Lord Lieutenancy); Armed Forces Champion Contact Centres and Customer Service Centres
<b>Jane Tremlett</b>	<b>Social Care &amp; Health</b> Adult Social Services; Residential Care; Home Care; Learning Disabilities; Mental Health; NHS Liaison/Collaboration/ Integration; Care Home Catering Services, Carers' Champion; Dementia Care Champion; Disability Ambassador

# A G E N D A

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST
3. TO SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD HELD ON THE 3<sup>RD</sup> JUNE 2019 5 - 8
4. QUESTIONS ON NOTICE BY MEMBERS
5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
6. CARMARTHENSHIRE RURAL AFFAIRS TASK GROUP REPORT & RECOMMENDATIONS 9 - 104
7. RIOT COUNTY SKATE PARK 105 - 110
8. ORIEL MYRDDIN TRUST GOVERNANCE REVIEW 111 - 116
9. ANY OTHER ITEMS OF BUSINESS THAT BY REASONS OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES THE CHAIR DECIDES SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS A MATTER OF URGENCY PURSUANT TO SECTION 100B(4)(B) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 1972.
10. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC  
THE REPORT RELATING TO THE FOLLOWING ITEM IS NOT FOR PUBLICATION AS IT CONTAINS EXEMPT INFORMATION AS DEFINED IN PARAGRAPH 14 OF PART 4 OF SCHEDULE 12A TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AS AMENDED BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) (VARIATION) (WALES) ORDER 2007. IF, FOLLOWING THE APPLICATION OF THE PUBLIC INTEREST TEST, THE BOARD RESOLVES PURSUANT TO THE ACT TO CONSIDER THIS ITEM IN PRIVATE, THE PUBLIC WILL BE EXCLUDED FROM THE MEETING DURING SUCH CONSIDERATION.
11. RE:FIT CYMRU (ENERGY EFFICIENCY) PHASE 1 PROJECT 117 - 136

*NB: Reports are only printed in black and white to reduce costs. All reports however are available on-line so that members of the Committee / County Council and the public can view photographs/graphs in colour*

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## EXECUTIVE BOARD

Monday, 3 June 2019

**PRESENT:** Councillor E. Dole (Chair);

**Councillors:**

C.A. Campbell, G. Davies, H.A.L. Evans, L.D. Evans, P.M. Hughes, P. Hughes-Griffiths, D.M. Jenkins, L.M. Stephens and J. Tremlett;

**Also in attendance:**

Councillors D. Cundy and K. Madge;

**The following Officers were in attendance:**

M. James, Chief Executive  
C. Moore, Director of Corporate Services  
G. Morgans, Director of Education & Children's Services  
W. Walters, Director of Regeneration & Policy  
L.R. Jones, Head of Administration and Law  
A. Williams, Head of Waste and Environmental Services  
S Burford, Project Manager  
D. Hockenhull, Marketing and Media Manager  
H. Morgan, Economic Development Manager  
M.S. Davies, Democratic Services Officer.

**Chamber, County Hall, Carmarthen: 10.00 am - 10.45 am**

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE / OTHER MATTERS**

There were no apologies for absence.

The Chair congratulated pupils from Carmarthenshire who had achieved success at the recent Urdd Eisteddfod.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST**

There were no declarations of personal interest.

**3. MINUTES**

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meetings of the Executive Board held on the 7<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> May, 2019 be signed as correct records.

**4. QUESTIONS ON NOTICE BY MEMBERS**

The Chair advised that no questions on notice had been submitted by members.

**5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

The Chair advised that no public questions had been received.

**6. CORPORATE STRATEGY 2018-23 - UPDATE JUNE 2019**

Further to minute 7 of the Executive Board meeting held on the 4<sup>th</sup> June 2018 consideration was given to the updated Corporate Strategy 2018-23 following a review of the Well-being Objectives. It was deemed to be good practice to ensure the Strategy was up to date to ensure resources were allocated to priorities.

Furthermore the Authority was legally bound to publish its Improvement Objectives and review the Well-being Objectives annually.  
Members commended the layout and content of the document.

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL THAT:**

- 6.1 the Corporate Strategy adopted in June 2018 be reaffirmed;**
- 6.2 the same set of Well-being Objectives be retained for 2019/20 subject to minor corrective adjustments.**

**7. EXTENSION OF PUBLIC SPACE PROTECTION ORDER (CARMARTHENSHIRE DOG ORDERS)**

The Board considered a report detailing a proposal to extend the existing Public Spaces Protection Order 2016 [Carmarthenshire Dog Orders] for the county of Carmarthenshire. The original Order had come in to force on the 1st July 2016 for a period of 3 years and was due to expire. It was considered therefore that it needed to be extended otherwise the current controls would no longer apply from the 1st July.

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED**

- 7.1 that the duration of the Carmarthenshire County Council (Dog Control) Public Spaces Protection Order 2016 be extended for a further period of 3 years with effect from the 1<sup>st</sup> July 2019;**
- 7.2 that the Council makes an Extension Order to give effect to the above extension and endorses the 2016 Order with suitable wording to reflect the fact that the duration of the 2016 order has been extended.**

**8. COUNCIL'S REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT**

The Executive Board considered the revenue budget monitoring report which provided an update on the latest budgetary position as at the 28<sup>th</sup> February, 2019.

Overall, the report forecast an end of year underspend of £1,118k on the Authority's net revenue budget, with an overspend at departmental level of £855k. The Housing Revenue account was predicting to be on target for 2018/19.

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the budget monitoring report be received.**

**9. CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2018-19 UPDATE**

The Executive Board considered a report providing an update on the capital programme spend against the budget for 2018/19 as at the 28<sup>th</sup> February, 2019. A net spend of £49.318m was forecasted compared with a working net budget of £55.993m giving a £-6.675m variance.

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the capital programme update budget monitoring report, as detailed in Appendix A and B, be received.**

**10. ANY OTHER ITEMS OF BUSINESS**

The Chair advised that there were no items of urgent items.

**11. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED, pursuant to the Local Government Act 1972, as**

amended by the Local Government (Access to Information)(Variation) (Wales) Order 2007, that the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item as the report contained exempt information as defined in paragraph 14 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

## 12. LLANELLI WELLNESS AND LIFE SCIENCE VILLAGE

Following the application of the public interest test it was **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED**, pursuant to the Act referred to in Minute 11 above, to consider this matter in private, with the public excluded from the meeting, as it would involve the disclosure of exempt information contained in the report which contained financial information relating to the RIBA stage 3 design services to be provided. Although the public interest test would normally favour transparency and openness, this was outweighed by the public interest in maintaining confidentiality in this case so as to protect the commercial interests of the provider in the wider market, as well as the Authority's interests for the purposes of further portions of design services to be sought.

The Executive Board considered a report which provided an update on the progress and future delivery timescale for the Llanelli Wellness and Life Science Village and detailed the need to commission further design development work for the City Deal and the Carmarthenshire County Council leisure elements of the Village in order to maintain programme.

### **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED**

- 12.1 to note the project dependencies and timeline implications for alternative scenarios to fund phase one delivery of the Village. Phase one to include the City Deal and Carmarthenshire County Council Leisure elements;**
- 12.2 to acknowledge the process milestones and commissioning requirements for the alternative scenarios and the impact on completion dates;**
- 12.3 to agree to progress to RIBA stage 3 on a phased basis. The proposal is to divide this work into separate phases with the first element costing £600,000. The work will further refine the detailed space, functionality and design linked to academic and health partner commitment. A subsequent report will follow successful completion of this first element to seek approval to complete RIBA Stage 3 work;**
- 12.4 to approve the expenditure of £600,000 on phase 1 of the RIBA stage 3 design works and approve the funding via the City Deal Earmarked Reserve.**

Mr. Mark James C.B.E., Chief Executive

The Chair commented that this had been Mr. Mark James' last meeting of the Executive Board and, on behalf of the Members, he thanked Mr. James for all his guidance and wished him well for the future. Mr. James thanked members for their good wishes.

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**CHAIR**

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**DATE**

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## EXECUTIVE BOARD

1 JULY 2019

### CARMARTHENSHIRE RURAL AFFAIRS TASK GROUP: REPORT & RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Recommendations / key decisions required:

1. To consider and approve the Task Group's final report and recommendations.
2. To establish a Rural Affairs Advisory Panel to follow on from the work of the Task Group.
3. To prepare an action plan to ensure progress on all of the recommendations with progress to be monitored through the Advisory Panel.

#### Reasons:

The Carmarthenshire Rural Affairs Task Group was established as a cross-party group to consider the issues effecting the rural communities in Carmarthenshire and to identify actions the Council, in partnership with other public bodies and organisations, can take in addressing those issues to ensure and support rural regeneration in future years.

Relevant scrutiny committee to be consulted: N/A

EXECUTIVE BOARD / COUNCIL / COMMITTEE:  
Scrutiny Committee recommendations / comments:

Exec Board Decision Required YES

Council Decision Required YES

#### EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:- Cllr Cefin Campbell

Directorate: Chief Executive's

Noelwyn Daniel

Report Author:  
Gwyneth Ayers

Designations:

Head of ICT & Corporate  
Policy

Corporate Policy & Partnership  
Manager

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## EXECUTIVE BOARD

1 JULY 2019

### CARMARTHENSHIRE RURAL AFFAIRS TASK GROUP: REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The cross-party Task Group, chaired by Cllr Cefin Campbell, was established in September 2017 and has been meeting regularly since then to consider the key issues facing Carmarthenshire's rural communities going forward. In addition to the chair, membership of the Task Group consists of three representatives from each political group (Plaid Cymru: Gareth Thomas; Jean Lewis; Ken Howell. Labour: Dot Jones; Shirley Matthews; Colin Evans. Independent: Joseph Davies; Sue Allen; Irfon Jones.)

The recommendations and report focus on eleven areas of influence that the Council can affect in terms of the county's rural communities:

- Economic development
- Planning and housing
- Education and skills
- Broadband and digital skills
- Tourism
- Transport and highways
- Agriculture and food
- Community resilience, access to services and third sector
- Renewable energy
- Environment and waste
- The Way Forward.

Evidence was given by a number of organisations and individuals with regard to these areas of influence and the Task Group have suggested 55 recommendations for implementation. It is suggested that once approved in principle the Council works to develop an action plan to ensure progress on each of the recommendations and that the recommendations are then in time embedded into the business plans for the respective Council services to take forward. For any recommendations that require further investment, once the feasibility has been established or opportunities identified a further business case will need to be presented for Executive Board consideration.

It is also suggested that the Task Group continues in an Advisory Panel capacity to support the Executive Board Member for Communities and Rural Affairs in taking forward these recommendations and monitoring progress and review and respond to the possible implications of Brexit and any other emerging issues likely to affect rural communities.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?

YES

## IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report :

Signed: Noelwyn Daniel, Head of ICT & Corporate Policy

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
<b>YES</b>	<b>NONE</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NONE</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NONE</b>	<b>NONE</b>

### 1. Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities

The report and recommendations are framed in the context of supporting the future sustainability of Carmarthenshire's rural communities and as such follows the principles set out in the Well-being of Future Generations Act. The Task Group has considered ways in which the Council can take action to ensure the long-term viability of its rural communities and the recommendations are aimed at preventing decline through working across Council departments as well as with other public sector organisations and other stakeholders.

### 3. Finance

Where already known, estimated costs of implementing some recommendations have been outlined in Appendix A, however it is expected that most of the recommendations should be delivered within existing service capacity.

For other recommendations where costs are currently unknown, once the recommendations are approved in principle, further work will be undertaken to identify appropriate sources of funding or additional capacity to deliver those recommendations that require additional funding. These will need to be considered on a case-by-case prioritised basis.

### 5. Risk Management Issues

The uncertainty surrounding the possible implications of Brexit on the agricultural sector is a concern and managing those risks will be challenging until the final Brexit position is known.

# CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below

Signed: Noelwyn Daniel, Head of ICT & Corporate Policy

## 1. Scrutiny Committee: N/A

## 2. Local Member(s)

All members were made aware of the Task Group's consultation undertaken between November 2017-April 2018.

## 3. Community / Town Council

All councils were made aware of the Task Group's consultation undertaken between November 2017-April 2018.

## 4. Relevant Partners

A full list of stakeholders who have contributed to the Task Group's deliberations is included as an appendix to the full report.

## 5. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations

Not applicable

## Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information

### List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

#### THESE ARE DETAILED BELOW

Title of Document	File Ref No.	Locations that the papers are available for public inspection
Characteristics of Carmarthenshire (prepared by Wavehill April 2019)		Available through Gwyneth Ayers
A number of other reference reports are listed in the appendices of the report		Available through Gwyneth Ayers

# Carmarthenshire Rural Affairs

## Report and Recommendations of the Carmarthenshire Rural Affairs Task Group

June 2019

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## Foreword

### 1. Background

### 2. Method

### 3. Findings & Recommendations

### 4. Conclusions & Next Steps

### 5. Appendices:

- a. Estimated costs of implementing recommendations
- b. Carmarthenshire Rural Affairs Task Group Terms of Reference
- c. Stakeholders, partners and interested parties that have presented information and suggestions to the Task Group
- d. Carmarthenshire Rural Affairs Consultation - Summary Report
- e. Carmarthenshire Rural Affairs Conference Report – 7 September 2018

## Foreword by the Chair

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It is my great pleasure as Chair of the Rural Affairs Task Group to present this report to my fellow elected members and the wider public. The publication of this report marks a significant milestone for the authority as it is the first time ever that a wide-ranging strategy has been developed to regenerate our rural communities in Carmarthenshire. I am extremely grateful to the members of the Task Group for their commitment and input and I would also like to extend my deep gratitude to the officers who have provided specialist advice and support throughout. I would also like to extend my sincerest thanks to all of the officers, stakeholders, partners and interested parties who have attended Task Group meetings to present information and evidence for our consideration and to those who submitted their thoughts and comments as part of the public consultation. Your contributions have given us plenty of food for thought and have shaped our findings and recommendations.

For those of us who live in Carmarthenshire's countryside we take for granted the many aspects of its outstanding natural beauty, its resilient and close-knit communities, its long and distinguished agricultural tradition, the rich history and heritage that meets us around every corner and the unique culture associated with the Welsh language, which has been an interweaving fabric of community life in this part of Wales for centuries. And of course there are the people who live here – ever welcoming, unstintingly supportive of each other and tremendously committed to making their communities a better place to live and work.

This report has tried to capture those characteristics and build on them so that future generations can appreciate their wealth and value. It is why we have put at the core of this regeneration strategy an emphasis on creating jobs and business opportunities so that we can retain our young people in Carmarthenshire and encourage those who have left the county to develop their talents elsewhere to return and help us grow our economy. Of course young families, who are often priced out of the local housing market, need homes to live in and our recommendations around planning include an array of initiatives which will allow our young people to live and work locally. These developments will also strengthen the position of the Welsh language as demographic changes are one of the key reasons for its gradual demise.

We also need to raise professional aspirations and inspire entrepreneurs to bring forward ideas so that we can establish businesses in rural communities and make innovative use of vacant or unused agricultural buildings to create vibrant economic hubs. Education and skills, in particular digital literacy will play a pivotal role in our ambition for the county. However, this can only be achieved if we can improve broadband provision across all parts of rural Carmarthenshire so that digital connectivity doesn't become a barrier to rural development. Improving the infrastructure around connecting communities with services and digital platforms is at the core of the strategy.

Another key component of rural regeneration is the development of our rural towns, traditionally market towns, and our aim is to launch a 'Ten Rural Towns Initiative' which would ensure that our traditional social and business centres are economically, socially,

environmentally and culturally sustainable in the future. We look forward to working with people who live and work in our rural towns and the surrounding villages to develop individual plans for rejuvenation. We will also work with key anchor institutions to encourage more local procurement of goods and services so that we can build a robust foundational economy and strengthen the Carmarthenshire pound.

We also recognise that we have a diverse agriculture and food production sector that we need to support and grow by looking at ways of clustering businesses with high quality products and develop a Carmarthenshire brand for marketing purposes. Our commitment to protecting our environment, reducing carbon emissions and use of plastics is already Council policy but we need to work with other partners and agencies to ensure that we all share these common goals.

Our commitment as an authority to regenerate our rural communities is real and achievable; however it is set against the backdrop of great uncertainty due to the on-going deliberations around Brexit and the possible ending of basic farm payments. That agriculture and its associated business sector provide the backbone of our rural communities is as clear as night follows day and that any major changes to an already competitive export market and basic subsidies will potentially have a catastrophic effect on the future viability of the industry and sustainability of our rural communities.

As a local authority we cannot directly influence decisions that are made in Cardiff, London and Brussels but we can strongly urge our representatives to do whatever they can to safeguard the future of rural Carmarthenshire and rural Wales. This is essential so that future generations can live, work and spend their leisure time in communities where valued traditions can be maintained, but are also resilient enough to adapt to an ever-changing social and economic landscape. This report seeks to encapsulate that crucial balance between preservation and progression.

**Cllr Cefin Campbell**

**Executive Board Member for Communities and Rural Affairs**

**Chair of the Carmarthenshire Rural Affairs Task Group**



# 1. Background

At the outset of the Task Group’s deliberations there was consideration of how we should define ‘rural’ in a Carmarthenshire context. It was agreed that as the Carmarthenshire Local Development Strategy (LDS) had been published as the framework for delivery of the Rural Development Plan 2014-2020) it would be beneficial to use that definition as a baseline for any statistical analysis and evidence but that there would not be a definitive cut-off point in terms of boundaries as part of the Task Group’s considerations and recommendations as rural communities tend to have wide ranging circles of influence and connectivity which often transcend geographical boundaries.

Therefore, the wards noted in the table below are considered to be rural Carmarthenshire wards.

WARDS INCLUDED IN THE RURAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN					
1)	Abergwili	14)	Kidwelly	27)	Llangyndeyrn
2)	Carmarthen Town North	15)	Laugharne Township	28)	Llannon
3)	Carmarthen Town South	16)	Llanboidy	29)	Llansteffan
4)	Carmarthen Town West	17)	Llanddarog	30)	Llanybydder
5)	Cenarth	18)	Llandeilo	31)	Manordeilo & Salem
6)	Cilycwm	19)	Llandoverly	32)	Pembrey
7)	Cynwyl Elfed	20)	Llandybie	33)	Pontyberem
8)	Cynwyl Gaeo	21)	Llanegwad	34)	Quarter Bach
9)	Garnant	22)	Llanfihangel Aberbythych	35)	St. Clears
10)	Glanamman	23)	Llanfihangel ar-arth	36)	St. Ishmael
11)	Glyn	24)	Llangadog	37)	Trelech
12)	Gorslas	25)	Llangeler	38)	Trimsaran
13)	Hendy	26)	Llangunnor	39)	Whitland

It must also be noted that most evidence stated below has been drawn from a mid-term review of the LDS undertaken by Wavehill: social and economic research, published in April 2019.

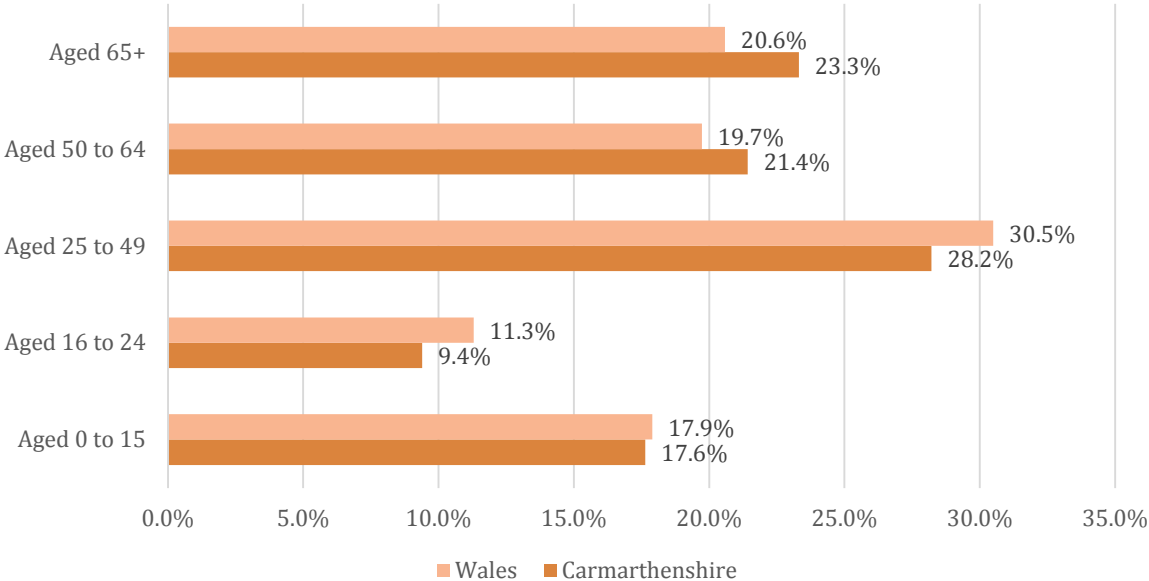
There are 186,500 people living in the whole of Carmarthenshire in 2017, representing 6% of the Welsh population. In the decade up to 2017 the population in Carmarthenshire increased by 2.9%, lower than the 4% increase experienced across Wales over the same period.<sup>1</sup>

When considering the rural Carmarthenshire wards (as identified above), it is noted that there are 112,921 people living in rural Carmarthenshire, representing 61% of the Carmarthenshire population. This is significantly higher than the percentage of all Wales residents deemed to live in rural areas, which stands at 33%.

<sup>1</sup> ONS Population Estimates, 2018

Figure 1 below shows that Carmarthenshire as a whole has a greater population of over 65s (23.3%) compared to the Wales average (20.6%). As a result, the old age dependency ratio (OADR), which is the number of people over 65 years old for every 1,000 people aged between 16 and 64 years old, is higher in Carmarthenshire (339) than in Wales (289). The OADR is an ONS measure which is used to understand the balance in the population and the needs of the demographic i.e. the higher the number of people aged 65+ per 1,000 in the working age population (16 to 64), the greater the needs.

**Figure 1: Population Age Demography in Carmarthenshire and Wales, 2017**



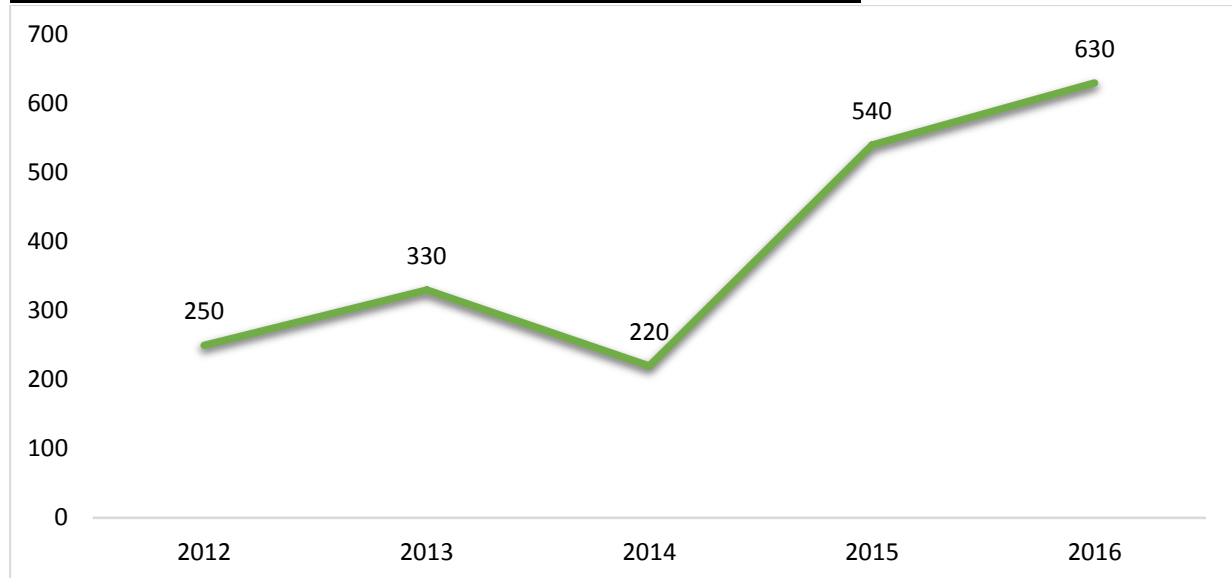
Source: ONS Population Estimates

Figure 1 also shows that the proportion of young people (16-24) is lower in Carmarthenshire (9.4%) than in Wales (11.3%).

Additionally, average (mean) age in Carmarthenshire stands at 42.3, almost two years higher than across Wales which stands at 40.6.

The growth in population described above can be partly accounted for by internal migration patterns between local authorities in the UK. Figure 2 overleaf shows that in the five years between 2012 and 2016 there has been more people migrating into Carmarthenshire from other local authorities than emigrating. In total, there was a net internal migration of almost 2,000 new residents into Carmarthenshire over the period. Rates of internal migration into the county appear to be rising with net 630 in 2016 compared to net 250 in 2012.

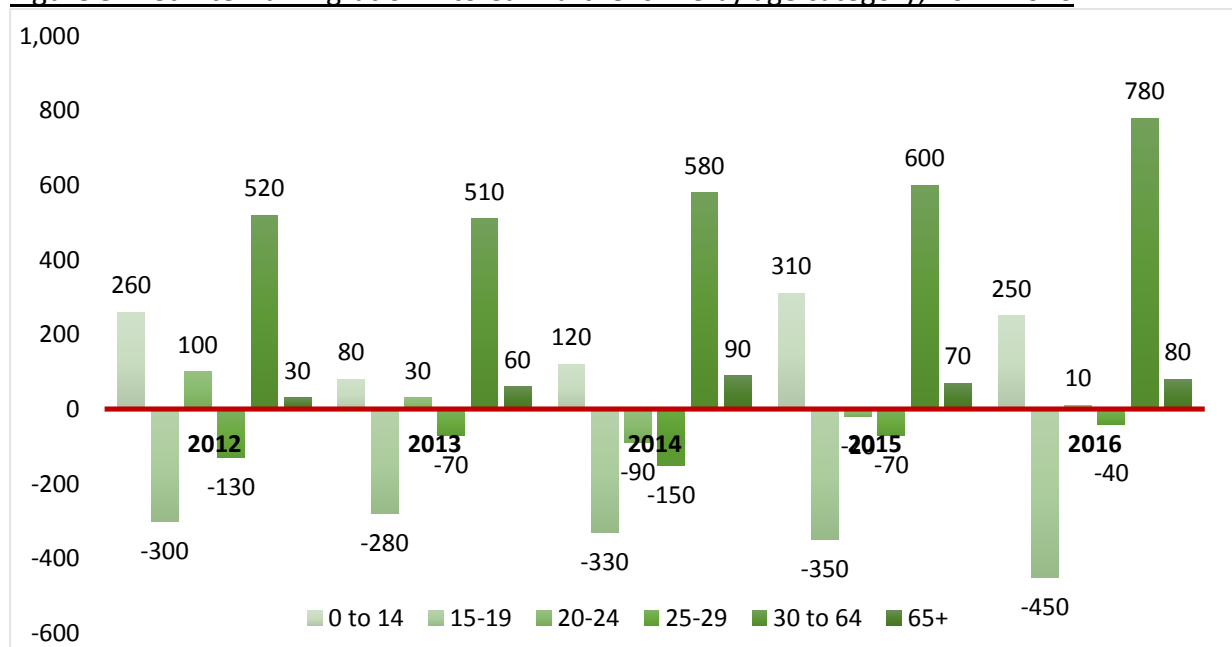
Figure 2: Net internal migration into Carmarthenshire, 2012-2016



Source: ONS data (based on a combination of several administrative datasets)

This net internal migration data is broken down by age category in Figure 3 below. This extrapolation reveals a broadly similar trend over the five years where there has been a net migration loss in the 15-19 age category followed by, in most years, a marginal gain in the 20-24 age group.

Figure 3: Net internal migration into Carmarthenshire by age category, 2012-2016



Source: ONS data (based on a combination of several administrative datasets)

According to the 2011 Census, Carmarthenshire as a whole had the highest number of Welsh speakers of all counties in Wales with 78,048 able to speak Welsh, 43.9% of the Carmarthenshire. However, when looking at the rural wards of Carmarthenshire the percentage of Welsh speakers raises to 50.2% of the population.

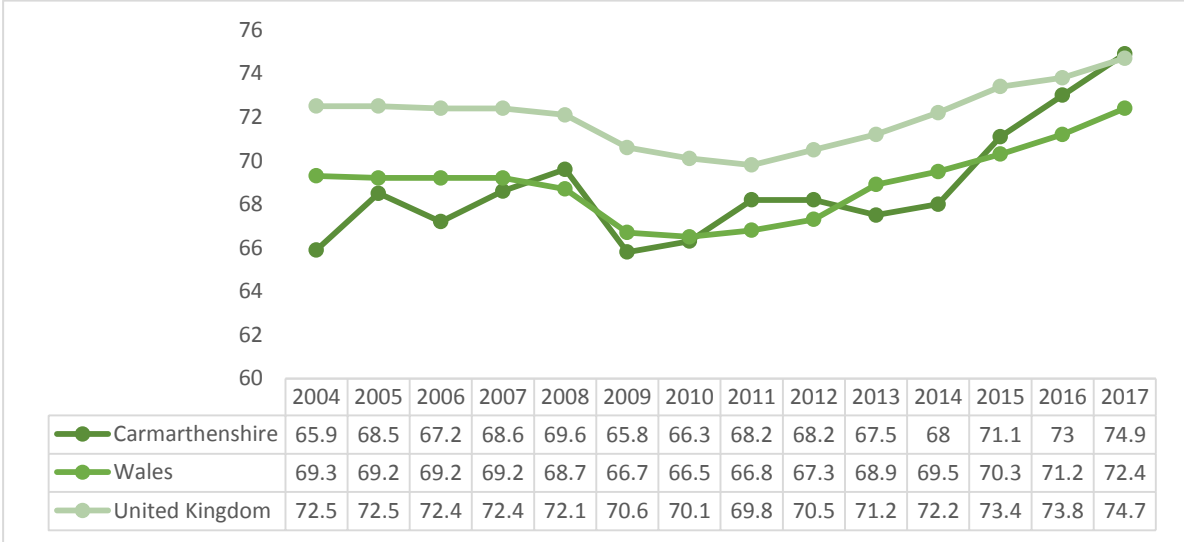
There is a slightly higher propensity of people with long-term and limiting illness in Carmarthenshire, which is likely to be explained by the county’s older demography when compared nationally. In the 2011 Census, a quarter (25%) of residents had a long-term health problem or disability where their day-to-day activities are limited to some extent. This is 2% higher than the average in Wales (23%).

The APS publishes several statistics on the state of the labour market including:

- Employment: The percentage of working age people in employment
- Unemployment: The percentage of economically active people aged 16 and over who are unemployed
- Economic inactivity: People who are neither in employment nor unemployed (this group includes those in employment, retired or caring for their family).

The data suggests that Carmarthenshire has a similar employment rate to the Welsh average, slightly below the UK, in each year since 2004, but has increased in the last three years to match UK levels by 2017 at just under 75%. Combined with the falling unemployment highlighted below the effect is for more people to be working in Carmarthenshire, beneficial for both the economy and communities.

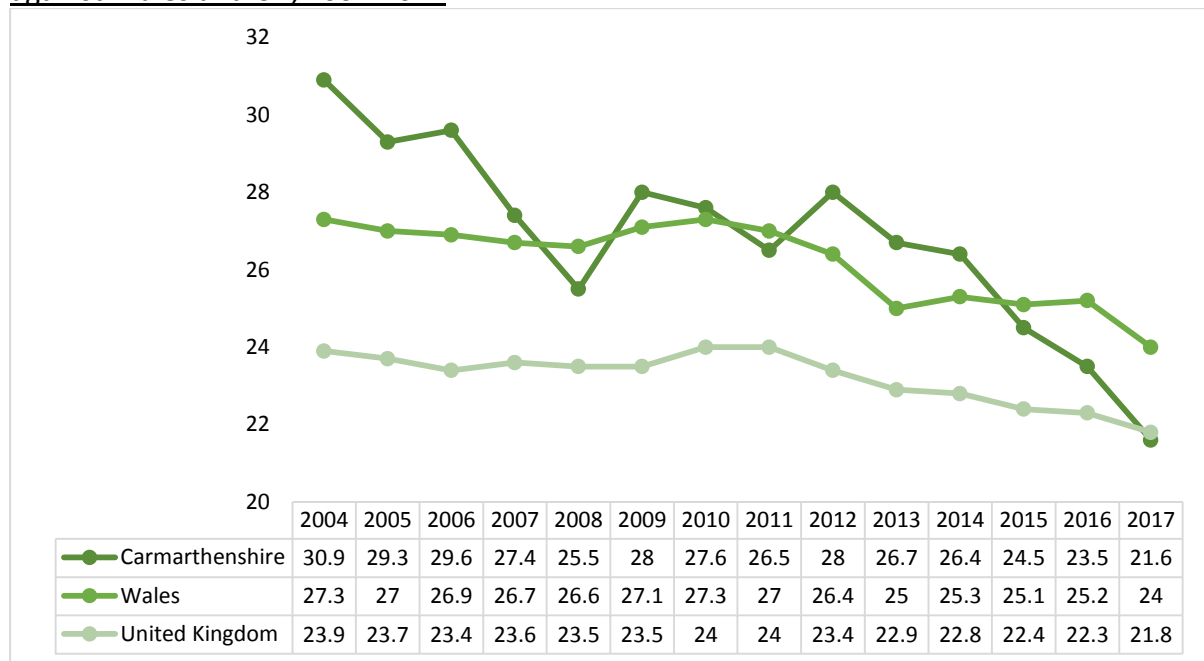
**Figure 4: Employment rate – aged 16-64 in Carmarthenshire benchmarked against Wales and UK, 2004-2017**



Source: APS

Finally, the APS also shows a vast decrease in the number of people who are economically inactive in Carmarthenshire – down from 30.9% in 2004 to 21.6% in 2017. Whereas the economic inactivity rate was much higher than both the Welsh and UK average in 2004, the latest figures show that it is now in line with the UK average and below the Welsh average.

**Figure 5: % who are economically inactive – aged 16-64 in Carmarthenshire benchmarked against Wales and UK, 2004-2017**



Source: APS

A greater proportion of people in Carmarthenshire are self-employed. In the most recent year (2017), APS found that 12% of those aged 16-64 in Carmarthenshire were self-employed compared to 10.6% in the UK and 9.6% in Wales.

A quarter (25.3%) of all those in employment work long hours of 45 or more per week and this is higher than the proportion working the same long hours in the UK (23.7%) and in Wales (21.5%). However, there are also more people in Carmarthenshire who work less than 35 hours per week (33.4%) compared to 32.4% in Wales and 30.8% in the UK. In addition, BRES data shows that there are slightly more part-time workers in Carmarthenshire as a proportion of the whole workforce (36% in 2016 compared to 35% in Wales).

Occupation information is also available from the Annual Population Survey and using a 3 year moving average again reveals that fewer people in Carmarthenshire are in professional occupations compared to the Wales average (16.1% vs. 18%). Associate professionals and Technical Occupations are also below the national average in Carmarthenshire at 9.7% compared to 13.1% in Wales. Occupations where Carmarthenshire has a greater proportion are skilled trades (14.7% vs 11.6%) and caring and leisure services (11.5% vs 9.5%). While important to the economy, the areas where Carmarthenshire has a lower proportion tend to be more productive occupations than the areas where they have a greater proportion.

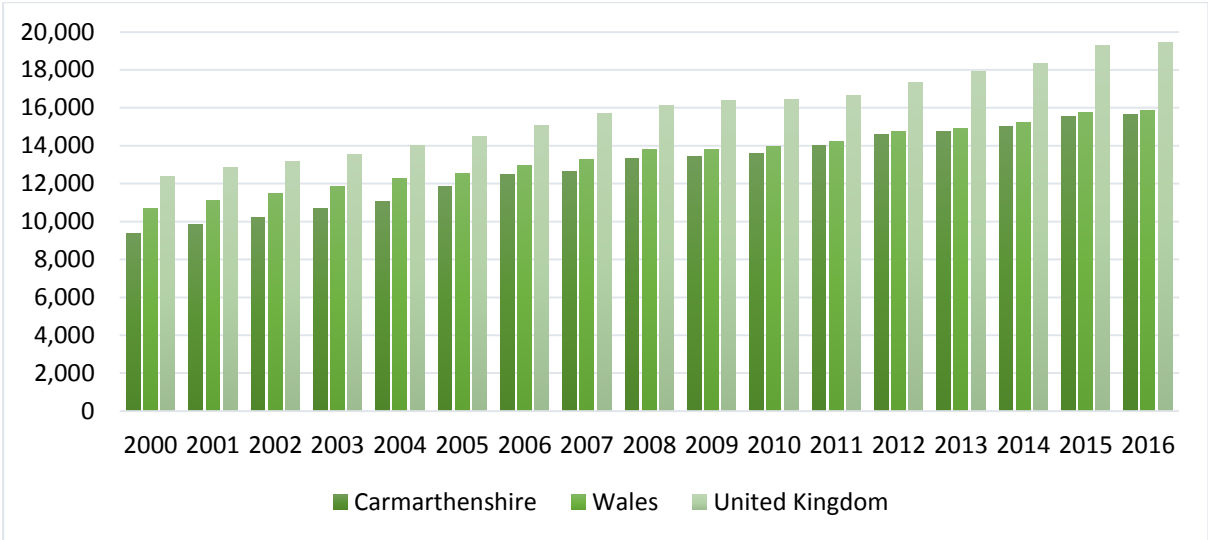
Job density can also be calculated to show commuting patterns and availability of employment in an area. In Carmarthenshire, the ratio of jobs per resident of working age was 0.7 in 2014 and has now grown to 0.76, on par with the Wales level but low compared to 0.85 in the UK. While there are fewer jobs available than residents of working age which indicates out-commuting or lower rates of economic activity, the increase over the last few years is a demonstration of a strengthening jobs market with an increase in real employment opportunities above population growth.

In relation to earnings, data from the ASHE (Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, conducted in April each year to obtain information about the levels, distribution and make-up of earnings and hours worked for employees) shows that on average residents in Carmarthenshire (£26,190) earn slightly less than the Welsh average (£27,039). In 2018 average resident earnings were identical in Rural Wales at £26,191 but all geographies are well below UK levels (£29,574). In each of the last ten years (2008-17) ASHE shows the median salary in Carmarthenshire at around 80-90% of the UK average.

Workplace based earnings in Carmarthenshire are below the resident-based earnings indicating that residents commute out for higher paid employment in other areas, with Swansea an important neighbour. Workplace based earnings are also lower in Carmarthenshire than in Wales (£25,500 vs £26,346) though slightly higher than the Rural Wales areas (£24,870). In the last 5 years workplace earnings have increased by 6.6%, below the 7.7% in Wales and 8.7% in the UK, suggesting that the increased employment and job creation is not converting into higher wages, possibly because of the ready supply of labour keeping wages suppressed.

Gross disposable household income (GDHI) accommodates some standard outgoings and can be used to show a level of cost of living in a certain area as tax and social contributions are discounted. In total it is the amount of money that all the individuals in the household sector have available for spending or saving after income distribution measures (for example, taxes, social contributions and benefits) have taken effect and per head comparisons show Carmarthenshire is below the Welsh average at £15,659.

**Figure 6: GDHI per head (£) in Carmarthenshire benchmarked against Wales and the UK, 2000-2016**



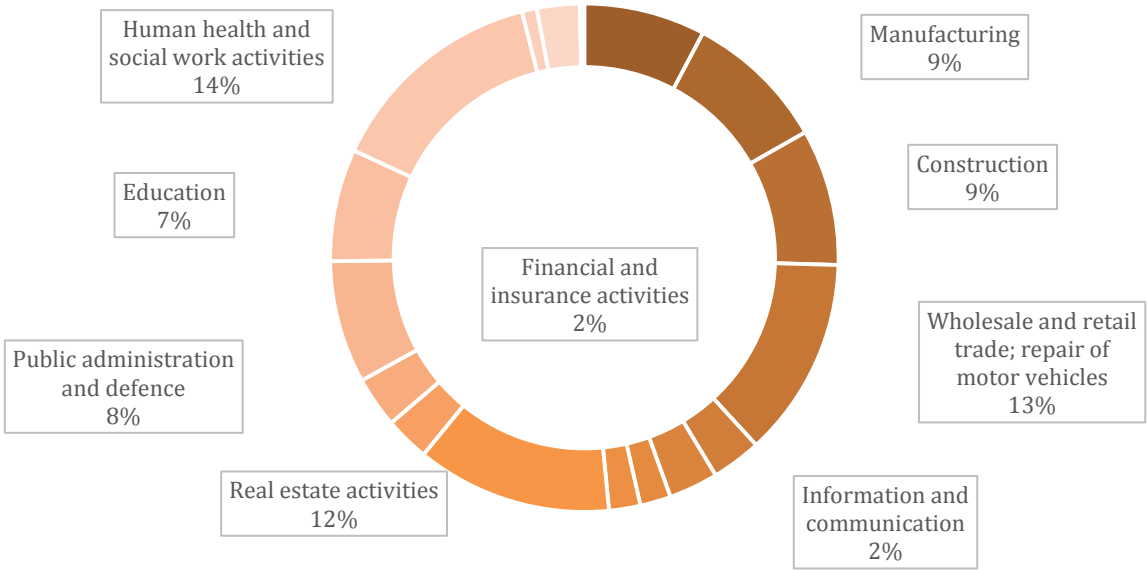
Source: ONS Data

However, the chart also shows that the gap has narrowed significantly since the beginning of this millennium. In 2001 GDHI per head in Carmarthenshire was 88% of the Welsh average and 76% of the UK average, whereas in 2016 it was up to 99% of the Welsh average and 81% of the UK average. This is another positive indicator for economic success in Carmarthenshire and something to monitor as one metric of average resident prosperity.

Gross value added (GVA) assesses the economic output generated by a region from all businesses and organisations. In total, Carmarthenshire generated £2.95 billion worth of GVA in 2017 which is 4.8% of all the GVA produced in Wales. This represents an increase of 28.7% over the last decade, similar to the level of growth in Wales (28.1%) over the same period. GVA per head is the best measure to compare the economic performance of regions of different sizes. ONS data reveals that GVA per head has consistently been lower in Carmarthenshire than in Wales and the UK over the past two decades. In the latest data in 2015, Carmarthenshire recorded £15,159 GVA per person compared to £18,535 in Wales and £25,878 throughout the UK.

GVA by industry provides a further indication of the relative areas of output and economic focus. In 2017 output in Carmarthenshire was spread across *Health* which contributed 14.1% to GVA, *Retail* and *Real Estate* drive another 12.7% and 12.5% respectively while high productivity and high value sectors such as *Financial and Insurance Activities* and *Information and Communication* contribute only 2% to GVA. The dominance of lower paid, lower productive sectors compared to high value areas is shared across Rural Wales but is still a limiting factor.

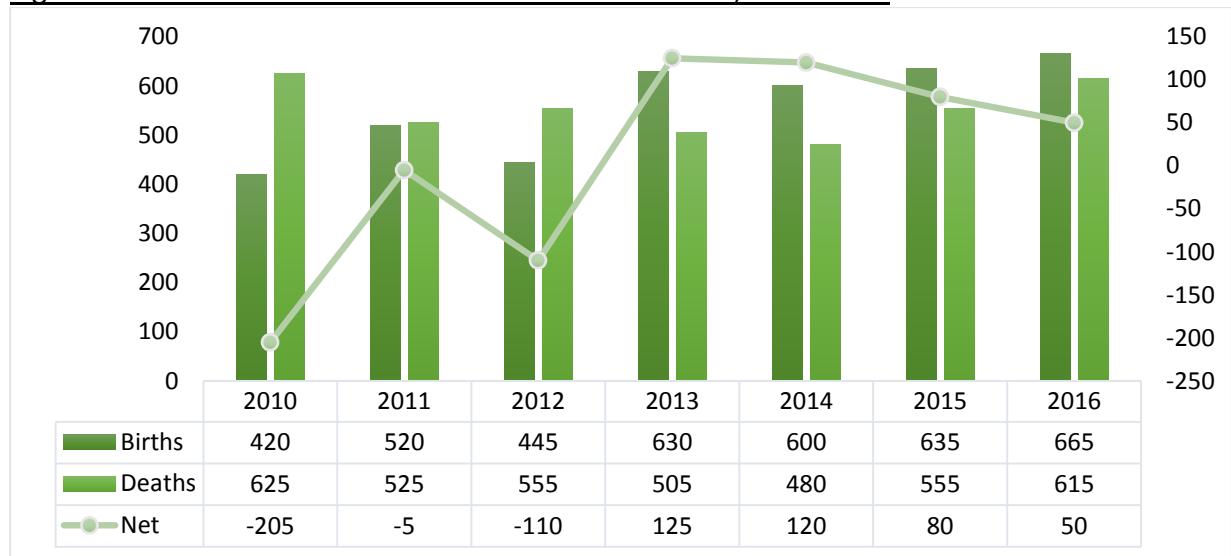
**Figure 7: Carmarthenshire GVA by Industry**



According to the IDBR (Inter-Departmental Business Register prepared by ONS), there were 7,720 businesses in Carmarthenshire in 2017, representing 7.5% of all businesses in Wales. The data also shows a greater business community in Carmarthenshire than in Wales as a whole with 38 businesses per thousand people in 2011 Census compared to 29 per thousand in Wales.

There were more businesses being created in each of the four years from 2013-2016 than businesses dissolved (i.e. net business creation), following a net loss in businesses in the three previous years. This points towards an improving business environment in Carmarthenshire.

Figure 8: Business births and deaths in Carmarthenshire, 2010-2016



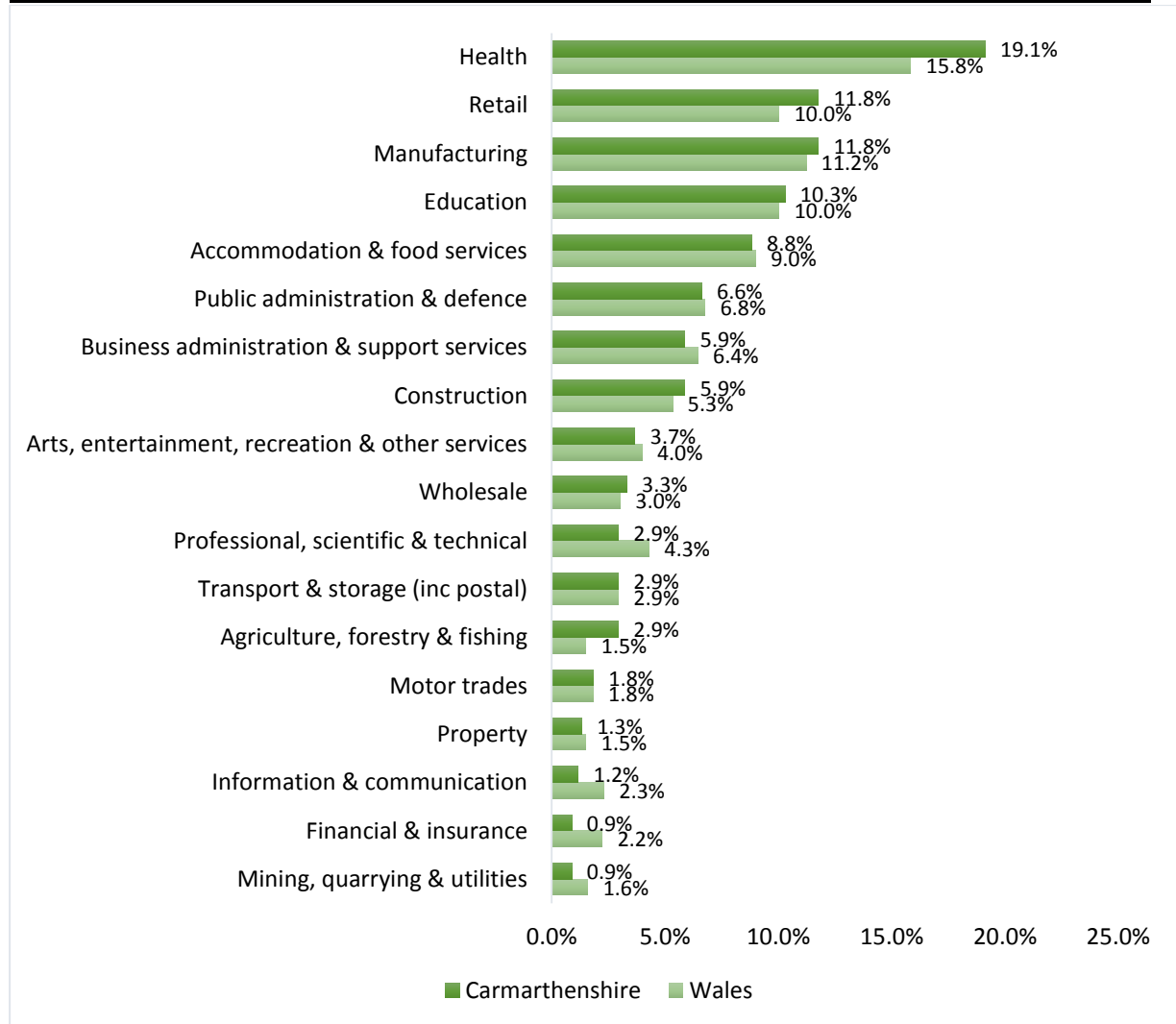
Source: ONS Data

Businesses in Carmarthenshire are typically smaller than businesses throughout Wales and the UK. In Carmarthenshire, microenterprises (0 to 9 employees) account for 91.4% of all business stock which is around 2% higher than the equivalent in Wales and the UK. There are proportionally fewer small (10 to 29) and medium-sized businesses (50 to 249) in Carmarthenshire.

Figure 9 overleaf shows the proportion of those in employment who work in each sector and reveals that the sectoral composition of businesses in Carmarthenshire is broadly similar to Wales as a whole. The Health and Retail sectors are particularly important to Carmarthenshire, accounting for more than 30% of all employment together. By comparison, these two sectors account for 25% of employment in Wales. Whilst agriculture, forestry and fishing represents one of the smaller sectors in terms of total employment, the proportion working in the sector in Carmarthenshire is almost double the national average (2.9% vs 1.5%).



Figure 9: Business sector breakdown in Carmarthenshire benchmarked against Wales, 2016



Source: BRES

## 2. Method

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- 2.1 Following local government elections in 2017, Cllr Emlyn Dole, Leader of Carmarthenshire County Council directed the establishment of a Carmarthenshire Rural Affairs Task Group with the aim being:
- ‘to consider the issues effecting the rural communities in Carmarthenshire and to identify actions the Council, in partnership with other public bodies and organisations, can take in addressing those issues to ensure and support rural regeneration in future years’.*
- 2.2 The cross-party Task Group, chaired by Cllr Cefin Campbell, Executive Board Member for Communities and Rural Affairs, was established in September 2017 and has undertaken a detailed and thorough assessment of rural issues in the 21 months it has been convened. The Terms of Reference for the Task Group are included in the Appendices. Membership of the Task Group was as follows:
- Three Plaid Cymru Group representatives: Cllrs Gareth Thomas; Jean Lewis and Ken Howell.
  - Three Independent Group representatives: Cllrs Irfon Jones; Joseph Davies and Sue Allen (replaced Andrew James in March 2018).
  - Three Labour Group representatives: Cllrs Dot Jones; Shirley Matthews; and Colin Evans.
- 2.3 During the course of the 21 months the Task Group has met 22 times and a number of different stakeholders, partners and interested parties have presented information and ideas to the Task Group. A full list of contributors is included in the Appendices.
- 2.4 At the November 2017 Royal Welsh Winter Fair the Task Group launched a public consultation to seek the views of Carmarthenshire residents and stakeholders on the matters that are important to secure the future prosperity of our rural communities. The consultation closed at the end of April 2018 and a total of 335 survey responses were received and one organisational written response. The main themes emerging from the consultation were concerns relating to:
- Broadband availability
  - Employment opportunities
  - Availability and access to public services
  - Access to transport
  - Future of farming
- A full summary of the findings from the consultation are included in the Appendices.
- 2.5 On the 7 September 2018 the Task Group held a Carmarthenshire Rural Affairs Conference at the Halliwell Centre, University of Wales Trinity Saint David, Carmarthen. Over 160 stakeholders attended to share their views and experiences in order to inform the considerations of the Task Group for this final report and recommendations. It was also an opportunity to hear from academics and experienced community and business leaders on their understanding and approach. A summary of the conference considerations are included in the Appendices.

### 3. Findings & Recommendations

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The Task Group have identified a number of key areas that influence the issues facing rural communities in Carmarthenshire. These are noted on the following pages with a synopsis of the key discussion points and evidence raised as part of the Task Group deliberations, along with key recommendations to be implemented. These key areas focus on:

- Economic Development
- Planning and Housing
- Education and Skills
- Broadband and Digital Skills
- Tourism
- Transport and Highways
- Agriculture and Food
- Community Resilience, Access to Services and Third Sector
- Renewable Energy
- Environment and Waste
- The Way Forward.

In addition to these key areas, a number of themes have emerged which act as overarching principles for the whole report and recommendations as matters that are central to the ambition to support and further develop the resilience and prosperity of Carmarthenshire's rural communities. These should be considered as overarching principles across all of the Task Group's recommendations.

1. **The Carmarthenshire Pound:** the importance of supporting direct spend in the local economy, be that public, private or personal spend. The impact that even small levels of spending can have on the local economy can be significant and there needs to be a concerted effort to re-visit the way the public sector procures and spends its finances in order to better support investment in local businesses and organisations. This also applies from a personal spend perspective and there needs to be a drive to promote the impact of how keeping spend in the local economy in the short term will have longer term positive consequences in terms of the social and economic resilience of our rural communities.
2. **Economic regeneration:** this is at the heart of rural sustainability but it needs to be relevant regeneration with a focus on developing suitable core and distinctive sectors for Carmarthenshire. Enabling suitable economic growth will in turn lead to the social, environmental and cultural sustainability of the county's rural towns and surrounding feeder communities.
3. **Housing according to local need:** there is a need to ensure that appropriate housing is available for local need, which includes availability of affordable housing. In order to make our rural communities sustainable we need to enable younger and working age people to be able to live there. The current housing market is driving people out of their indigenous communities and preventing them from returning home. There needs to be a move in local planning policy from larger housing developments in our main towns to an approach which enables a suitable mix and proportion of development in our rural towns and communities to address local housing demand and need.
4. **Infrastructure:** the county's broadband and transport infrastructure have been raised

as key issues which are currently preventing development and increasing isolation. These issues have been raised for a number of years and there is no quick fix to addressing them. However, there is a need to be innovative and respond to local issues with local solutions rather than trying to address the issues with a blanket one-size fits all response. Funding is always going to be an issue on these matters and the Council alone will not be in a position to resolve them, therefore communities, groups, organisations and businesses need to work together to develop a range of solutions to address local needs.

5. **Community life:** Carmarthenshire is fortunate in many respects in that it still has a strong community network and focus through its local schools, community groups, associations, sports clubs and activities. However, this will only be apparent to those who are able and willing to engage with their local communities and many are left isolated and vulnerable with little support or access to such community networks. The nature of rural communities are evolving and with a reduction in service provision due to budgetary constraints there needs to be greater recognition and support to the formal and informal role that community networks and enterprises can play in supporting rural communities.
6. **Welsh language:** 50.2% of the population in Carmarthenshire's rural wards speak Welsh, which is significantly higher than the whole county average of 43.9%. Rural communities therefore play a central role in the future viability of the language and maintaining their resilience and growth will enable the Welsh language to develop and thrive once again.
7. **Agriculture:** the sector has been described by many as the backbone of Carmarthenshire's rural communities from an economic, social, environmental and cultural perspective. Although total levels of direct employment within the sector are relatively low at 2.9%, compared to 19.1% in the Health sector and 15.8% in the retail sector, the wider impact the sector has on rural communities is far-reaching and immeasurable in terms of value. The uncertainty surrounding the possible implications of Brexit on the agricultural sector is a concern. The sector is likely to face a significant period of change over coming years which could influence the shape and nature of farming and the management of our land forever.

## 3.1 Economic Development

- 3.1.1 For a number of years, Carmarthenshire County Council has identified that economic regeneration is at the heart of sustaining and further developing Carmarthenshire as a county. To date, the main focus of this regeneration work has been on the main town locations of Ammanford, Carmarthen and Llanelli alongside other specific county-wide programmes and projects. In addition, the Swansea Bay City Deal is a significant programme for the whole county, including rural areas, which will influence and make progress towards addressing a number of key issues identified in this report including employment opportunities, broadband infrastructure, skills and housing. These are all important interventions which the Council must ensure benefit Carmarthenshire as a whole.
- 3.1.2 During the course of the Task Group's discussions and representations from stakeholders, the key role of the county's smaller towns or the traditional market towns, has been referred to several times especially in terms of their links with the smaller villages and hamlets that surround them. The demise of services such as banks, Post Offices and other service facilities in these towns has had significant impact with many people now having to travel to the bigger towns to access these services. However, these towns are still well placed to act as a central plank for rural development with the potential for the clustering of business and services in order to address both economic and social issues in order to ensure the future sustainability of our rural communities.
- 3.1.3 In looking at rural socio-economic development there needs to be a clear understanding of the interdependencies between the hamlets, villages, market towns, main towns, county and wider region. In their consultation response to the Task Group, Cymdeithas yr Iaith referred to these interdependencies as '*concentric circles*', a concept which we believe should be taken forward through a place-based multi-agency and multi-stakeholder approach. This cannot be a one size fits all approach as each community will have its own needs but the Council is well placed to act as a facilitator to initiate and take this approach forward.
- 3.1.4 A significant part of this place-based approach will be a greater focus on nurturing the sectors that can be considered the foundations of our local economy - care, food, housing, energy, construction etc. In Carmarthenshire, the agricultural and transport sectors with its associated business network should also be considered as part of our foundational economies. These are the types of services that we as citizens rely on, on a daily basis. These sectors account for four in ten jobs in Wales. The Council, along with other public sector partners, should further develop its approach, engagement and support for these sectors through the wider Foundational Economy lens. In addition, the Council should also ensure that it supports the principles of development within the circular economy model which aims to keep resources in use for as long as possible, extract the maximum value from them whilst in use, then recover and regenerate products and materials at the end of each service life. As well as creating new opportunities for growth, a more circular economy will: reduce waste; drive greater resource productivity; deliver a more competitive Carmarthenshire economy; position Carmarthenshire to better address emerging resource security/scarcity issues in the future; and help reduce the environmental

impacts of our production and consumption in Carmarthenshire.

- 3.1.5 Carmarthenshire has a higher proportion of micro-enterprises (between 0 and 9 employees) accounting for 91.4% of all business stock in the county (compared to 89.2% across Wales). This is particularly prevalent in the county's rural areas. Going forward, support for this sector, through the Council and other agencies will be essential. One of the key issues highlighted by the Task Group was the need for business incubation sites and medium sized business units for progression. In addition, many believe that the cost of undertaking development in rural areas compared to the end commercial value of the development is disproportionate, and is compounded by factors of remoteness and demand, therefore companies need additional support and assurance to anchor their investment in the county's more rural areas. The Council's Rural Enterprise Fund, which provides assistance to enterprises and sole traders for the development of new and existing business premises has been hugely popular and successful, and this approach needs to continue and further develop. Since it was established in 2017, the fund to date has supported 16 projects worth £3.9m and has supported the creation of 130 jobs and provided 70,000 square foot of commercial floor-space.
- 3.1.6 The need to provide support for new and established businesses in the county is fully recognised and there are a number of agencies that the Task Group have heard from that are providing this support. The number of different agencies working within this sphere have raised questions about whether or not the support capacity is being utilised appropriately and if there is enough clustering and signposting between agencies to ensure businesses are offered the most appropriate support but also to ensure that there is no duplication of effort.
- 3.1.7 Supporting entrepreneurship amongst young people has also been identified as a key factor. With many of our young people leaving the county to follow education and employment opportunities we need to nurture and support those who want to stay in the county to develop and raise their aspirations. We must also work to improve the offer for those people, who having followed their education choices elsewhere and want to return to the county to live and work. As David Hieatt emphasised at the Rural Affairs Conference, we mustn't be frightened of our young people moving away but we must do all that we can to *'bring the treasure back'*.
- 3.1.8 The Council also has a significant rural estate with a total of 25 farms located across the county as well as other land and assets. Working with other public sector partners, through the Carmarthenshire Public Services Board, there is a need to fully review these assets to ensure the estate is used in the most efficient and effective way in the future. However, the Task Group urges the Council to maintain ownership of this estate in future, including the associated fishing rights.
- 3.1.9 The Council has a strong track record of accessing and fully utilising funding available through external sources to aid rural development. The current LEADER programme, funded through the Rural Development Plan for Wales, is well placed to support rural development and the Arfor programme will also support business development specifically focused on the Welsh language.

## Recommendations

1	<p>That the Council works with the local communities and stakeholders in ten of its rural towns (and surrounding communities) to develop individual plans that will aim to provide a long-term strategic vision to secure economic, cultural, social and environmental sustainability for those towns. The proposed ten rural towns are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Llandovery</li> <li>ii. St Clears</li> <li>iii. Whitland</li> <li>iv. Newcastle Emlyn</li> <li>v. Laugharne</li> <li>vi. Cwmamman (Amman Valley)</li> <li>vii. Llanybydder</li> <li>viii. Kidwelly (Gwendraeth)</li> <li>ix. Llandeilo</li> <li>x. Cross Hands.</li> </ol> <p>Whilst each plan will be relevant to the needs of the individual town it is expected that proposals will be shaped by the strategic aims of the Council's Transformations Strategy which focuses on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Growing existing business</li> <li>• Maximising job creation</li> <li>• Supporting the development of a knowledge economy</li> <li>• Developing distinctiveness of the area</li> <li>• Identifying current and future role and models of service provision in the community</li> <li>• Sustainable energy</li> <li>• Service provision.</li> </ul> <p>In addition, the overall programme will need to consider ways in which the Council could develop:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. opportunities (based on demand) to develop business support hubs in town centre locations, which would act as an incubation facility for start-up businesses with fixed or flexible office accommodation for a number of micro businesses;</li> <li>b. opportunities to develop multi-agency public service hubs in town centre locations, which would act as a local point of contact for a number of public sector services;</li> <li>c. opportunities for the Council's economic development and housing teams to work together to support town centre regeneration.</li> </ol>
2	<p>That the Council continues to implement existing funding opportunities for rural development and identify external public and private sector funding opportunities to assist with the economic growth aspirations of the ten rural towns and the county's rural businesses.</p>

3	That the Council ensures a focus on the further development of the Foundational Economy sector within Carmarthenshire whilst supporting the principles of the Circular Economy.
4	That the Council works to enable the re-use of vacant or unused buildings on agricultural land and within rural towns and villages, to develop business incubator or commercial accommodation in rural areas.
5	That the Council maintains its rural estate but reviews its use and policy going forward, whilst also working with other public sector partners to identify development opportunities through their rural estate.
6	That the Council continues to make grant funding available to support the growth aspirations of the county's entrepreneurs and rural businesses whilst exploring the feasibility of establishing a local private sector loan fund.
7	That the Council works with other business support agencies and services (e.g. Business Wales, Business in Focus, Farming Connect etc) to enable greater clustering of support and signposting to local businesses.



## 3.2 Planning & Housing

- 3.2.1 The role that planning plays in supporting the future sustainability of our rural communities has been raised time and again as part of the discussions of the Task Group. There is of course a recognition of the need for sensitive consideration of a number of factors when looking at development in rural areas but the Task Group feels that current planning policy from Welsh Government does not give enough flexibility to enable development, based on local need, in our most rural communities. This stagnation means that rural communities are being left behind in terms of development with opportunities for housing, business and diversification being targeted more towards the main population centres. It is also felt that this is contributing to a steady flow of younger, working age people out of the rural communities to seek suitable housing and employment which in turn is affecting the resilience of these communities.
- 3.2.2 In particular, national planning policy relating to sustainable rural communities (TAN 6) also needs to be reviewed to take into consideration socio-economic changes that rural communities have faced in the last ten years since the TAN was developed, but especially as a result of the likely implications of Brexit on the agricultural sector. The agricultural sector faces a very uncertain period with many of the possible implications of Brexit still unknown. However, planning policy needs to be reviewed in order to enable a more flexible approach to development, based on local need and opportunities in rural areas so that people working within the agricultural sector and wider community are able to diversify and adjust as appropriate.
- 3.2.3 It is also felt that following the recognition in the Planning Act 2015 that impact of development on the Welsh language should be a material consideration, the TAN 20 needs to be amended to reflect the new legislation. It is also felt that the TAN should set out a specific methodology for Welsh Language Impact Assessments of Local Development Plans (LDP) as well as making provision for assessing the impact of development of all sites at the planning application stage, as it is only at this stage that you have the necessary detail to undertake a full and robust assessment.
- 3.2.4 The Council is currently in the process of revising its Local Development Plan and the Task Group feels there is a need to redress the current balance to enable appropriate and suitable development within our rural towns and communities. This development needs to be taken forward based on local need rather than national targets and regulations. There should of course be a thorough consideration and understanding of the impact that any residential or business development may have on the nature and construct of rural communities, especially in terms of its possible positive or negative impact on the Welsh language, and the size of development should also be comparative to the existing community, but suitable development in our rural communities needs to be enabled in order to ensure the sustainability of our rural communities going forward.
- 3.2.5 The availability of affordable housing is also a significant issue in rural communities. In Carmarthenshire, affordable homes are designated based on the median income (as determined by CACI Paycheck which provides gross household income estimates) of specific communities. For example, a typical 3 bedroom house would be classified as affordable if the cost is 3 times the median income for that area plus a 5% deposit. The sale prices of these homes is restricted both at initial sale and subsequent

occupiers. Average residents earnings in Carmarthenshire stand at £26,190 (ASHE) with average house prices in rural wards such as Llangeler standing at £207,635 and Cilycwm at £206,150 (as at February 2019), the availability and location of suitable housing across the county is key. The Task Group welcomes the approach and progress the Council have made to date through the ‘Carmarthenshire Affordable Homes Delivery Plan 2016-2020’ in delivering their commitment to establish an additional 1,000 affordable homes in the county, with 700 already delivered either through purchase of suitable properties through the private market or supporting the building of new homes. This commitment needs to be fully delivered and further developed through the work of Cartrefi Croeso which has been established by Carmarthenshire County Council as an arm’s length company to address local housing need by developing new homes for sale and to rent. The company will have a strong focus on increasing provision of suitable homes across the county and in particular within rural communities. It is also important that the Council looks to further develop its supply of Council houses and the Task Group are very encouraged that proposals are under development to build up to 900 new Council houses to be located across the county according to local need.

- 3.2.6 Second home ownership in Carmarthenshire is at around the 950 properties mark. This is a substantial number in itself but is significantly less than rates in Pembrokeshire (3,000), Ceredigion (2,000) and Gwynedd (4,800). Whilst other councils have introduced measures to increase council tax rates on second homes, there is currently a ‘loophole’ in national legislation which means that second home owners can switch from Council Tax to a Business Tax. Whilst the Council is aware of the potential negative impact of second homes on the viability of rural communities, the legislative issues need to be resolved before the Council considers its future position on council tax rates for second homes.

Recommendations	
8	To lobby Welsh Government to amend national planning policy, and in particular <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. TAN 6 to enable a more flexible approach to development in rural areas, especially in areas outside of identified settlements, and</li> <li>b. TAN 20 in terms of ensuring the impact of any development on the Welsh language is required as a material consideration, as stipulated in the Planning Act 2015 and that its status in legislation is reflected in the TAN.</li> </ul>
9	To lobby Welsh Government to amend planning policy (as part of TAN 6) in relation to the construction of a second dwelling on established farms as the current requirements relating to demonstration of income from the farm to enable development is no longer valid. Given the current and future changing nature of agriculture and possible implications of Brexit, income from the farm will have to be supplemented with income from other sources i.e. extended family members taking up employment outside of the farm setting. Therefore, the total income of the household, as a family unit, needs to be considered rather than farm income alone.
10	That the Council ensures that the revised Local Development Plan:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. enables appropriate scale residential and business development in smaller community areas as needed</li> <li>b. enables appropriate tenure mix in residential developments, based on local housing need</li> <li>c. enables the appropriate allocation of affordable homes within rural areas</li> <li>d. enables tourism and business development in rural areas to support future development and diversification.</li> </ul>
11	<p>That the Council amends its planning policy to enable the citing of a new/re-developed farmhouse or dwelling linked to an agricultural property so that it can be located a reasonable distance outside of the working farm yard in order to ensure due regard can be given to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Health and safety considerations;</li> <li>b. Biosecurity; and</li> <li>c. Lessen the risk of zoonotic diseases (diseases that can be transferred between people and animals e.g. TB).</li> </ul>
12	<p>That the Council looks into the feasibility of enabling the establishment/creation of new small-holdings in rural areas, outside identified settlements on the basis of local need and the potential positive contribution to the economic, social, cultural and environmental sustainability of the local community.</p>
13	<p>That the Council continues to support and further develop its ambitious Carmarthenshire Affordable Homes Delivery Plan post 2020 to ensure the continuation of increased availability of affordable homes within the county and ensure the proposals for building new Council houses reflect local housing needs in rural areas.</p>

## 3.3 Education & Skills

- 3.3.1 Education and skills will play a pivotal role in supporting rural development and these key issues have been raised on numerous occasions during the Task Group's considerations. In order to support economic development in the area we need to ensure that we are able to provide the appropriate skills and training to people of all ages living and working in the county. As part of the evidence received from representatives from the business sector it was noted that more needs to be done to encourage and support entrepreneurship amongst our younger people and that it's also important to raise professional aspirations. Maintaining the status quo is not an option for the longer-term sustainability of our rural communities so we need to develop skills to challenge and think innovatively about future solutions, provision and ways of working.
- 3.3.2 This is a core objective of the Swansea Bay City Deal's Skills and Talent initiative which will work with a range of partners from the private sector, higher and further education, schools and the third sector to develop bespoke education and training solutions that address local business and professional needs. In addition to the local schools, Coleg Sir Gâr (including the Gelli Aur campus), University of Wales Trinity Saint David, other education providers and agencies such as Careers Wales will need to play a driving role in taking this project forward.
- 3.3.3 It is also widely accepted that rural community schools face a challenging future. As of February 2019, Carmarthenshire has a total of 1 nursery school and 95 primary schools across the county. 67 of those schools are within rural Carmarthenshire (based on the Carmarthenshire Rural Development Plan definition of rural). There are varying pupil numbers in those schools within the rural areas:
- 17 schools with less than 50 pupils
  - 18 schools with between 51 and 100 pupils
  - 14 schools with between 101 and 200 pupils
  - 11 schools with between 201 and 300 pupils
  - 7 schools with over 301 pupils.
- 3.3.4 Rural schools play a significant role in the life and fabric of the communities in which they are situated. Most of the county's rural schools are Welsh medium and access to a school within close proximity to the community in which they live is also a factor for families with school age children. Whilst recognising this significant role, it must be acknowledged that the Council faces a position of ever reducing budgets and increasing expectations in terms of curriculum provision. However, the Council should remain fully supportive of doing all that it can to support and build the future resilience and sustainability of its rural schools, and will work to Welsh Government's set of procedures and requirements within the School Organisation Code which works on a presumption against closure.
- 3.3.5 In order to address these challenges, the Council has worked with a number of smaller sized schools to introduce a federation model which enables schools to work together. To date, there are a total of 30 federation schools in Carmarthenshire with, 10 schools federated within rural Carmarthenshire:

- 2 federations of 2 schools
- 2 federations of 3 schools.

Further development and formalisation of the federation model is considered to be a suitable way forward when addressing the needs of rural schools and communities.

- 3.3.6 The Council’s Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2017-2020 states its vision as enabling a bilingual Carmarthenshire which would see all young people, from all walks of life, having the opportunity to be bilingual when they emerge from the education system, proud of their identity and able to celebrate both languages. In order to achieve this the Council will support all schools to move along with Welsh language medium continuum in terms of provision. This will ensure significant growth in Welsh-medium education and training to increase the number of people of all ages who become fluent in both Welsh and English and have the ability to use their languages confidently with their families, in their communities and in the workplace. Delivering this progression will also support the Welsh Government’s target to reach 1 million Welsh speakers by 2050.
- 3.3.7 The availability and access to registered childcare in rural areas has also been raised, especially Welsh medium childcare. The Council is required to undertake a ‘Childcare Sufficiency Assessment’ every 5-years in order to map provision and identify any gaps and the latest findings show that although the number of childcare providers and places has increased since the last assessment in 2013, there is still insufficient full day care, childminders and out of school care in certain areas. With the recent introduction of the Welsh Government’s 30-hours per week of free childcare for working parents it is anticipated that this could see an increase in provision or providers. This could be an important business or social enterprise development opportunity in rural areas. It is also recognised that access to childcare and wrap around care provision around school hours will be deciding factors for working parents in their choice of schools going forward and as a result, rural schools need to be in a position to provide a comprehensive package for pupils and parents.
- 3.3.8 This gap in provision within the childcare sector could be a good opportunity for the Council to work with Coleg Sir Gâr (and any other relevant partners) to develop a skills hub model to address the skills shortage in this sector, and other work based and vocational sectors. Work through the Regional Learning & Skills Partnerships will support identification of the skills gap across other sectors and could be a core element of the county’s work in supporting the foundational economy sectors as referenced in the economic development section of this report (para. 3.1.4).

## Recommendations

14	<p>That the Council considers the recommendations of the Education &amp; Children’s Services Scrutiny Committee Task and Finish ‘A review of the current provision for early year’s education, childcare and play opportunities’ to be published in 2019 which include recommendations focused on:</p> <p>a. The availability and provision of childcare across the county but especially in the rural areas</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b. Supporting the childcare sector to increase the availability and provision of Welsh medium childcare across the county</li> <li>c. The availability of after school clubs and wrap around care provision through schools</li> <li>d. Reviewing the Council's admissions policy for full-time education for 4 year olds</li> <li>e. Ensuring all parents and carers receive information about the benefit of Welsh medium education and bilingualism</li> <li>f. Supporting schools and local partners to develop a model which would enable community use of school play facilities outside of school hours.</li> </ul> <p>The recommendations would have a significant impact on provision and access to childcare and play opportunities in rural areas as well as supporting the principle of building the future resilience and sustainability of rural schools.</p>
15	That the Council remains fully supportive of doing all that it can to support and build the future resilience and sustainability of its rural schools, and will work to Welsh Government's set of procedures and requirements within the School Organisation Code which works on a presumption against closure.
16	That the Council continues with the progress being made in moving all primary and secondary schools along the continuum in terms of increasing Welsh medium provision.
17	That the Council, through the Swansea Bay City Deal and Regional Learning and Skills Partnership Skills and Talent Project, look to increase careers input at a younger age in schools to inspire and raise aspirations in terms of local employment and entrepreneurship opportunities.
18	That the Council works with Coleg Sir Gâr to consider options for the development of a rural innovation, technology and skills hub model across the county which would work to address the skills shortage in certain sectors focussing on work based/vocational skills.
19	That the Council develops a suite of placement/work experience opportunities with local businesses in order to increase local awareness of career options.
20	That the Council works with partners to develop a tracking system for young people leaving Carmarthenshire for education and employment opportunities with a view to signposting them to employment opportunities to enable them to return to Carmarthenshire.
21	That the Council works with partners to undertake further mapping work on the possible implications of Brexit on certain workforce sectors across the county.

## 3.4 Broadband & Digital Skills

- 3.4.1 Access to broadband has been raised consistently as a barrier to rural development by most stakeholders providing evidence to the Task Group and by residents through the consultation. Providing and managing a business is now becoming more dependent on broadband connectivity and the speed and reliability of that connectivity is also vitally important. More and more farm business functions such as returns, forms, registrations and other business related functions such as VAT are now required to be completed online. In addition, with the closure of banks in rural towns there is an increasing dependence on access to online banking.
- 3.4.2 In addition to the economic impact, lack of broadband access can also have a social and community impact and can contribute to increasing social isolation and community connectivity. With social media now playing an integral part in communicating community life, lack of online access can have a detrimental effect.
- 3.4.3 Figures provided by Openreach as part of their evidence to the Task Group in May 2018 noted that following roll-out of the Welsh Government Superfast programme, 86% of Carmarthenshire households have access to superfast, however, only 40% of those households were accessing it. There is therefore a need to better understand why take-up rates are so low compared to the availability. It was also noted that the superfast programme would not be able to address access issues for properties in more isolated rural areas and that other delivery solutions would need to be considered such as:
- Fixed wireless (point to point)
  - Enhanced 4G or 5G infrastructure
  - Full fibre
  - Public Authority Anchor Tenancy (using an existing fibre network through a school etc)
  - Self-dig (led by the local community)
  - Structure approach to Universal Service Obligation (cluster groups to work as networks to share the costs of establishing connectivity).
- 3.4.4 The Task Group were made aware that Welsh Government are in the process of rolling out the Broadband Superfast 2 programme which would be a follow on to the initial programme delivered by Openreach and would look to address connectivity issues for the households and communities that had not benefited from the first programme. However, to date there is little information available about the delivery approach for this second programme and timescales for delivery.
- 3.4.5 During discussions, several references were made to the successful [Superfast Cornwall](#) project, which since 2011 has been working on connecting as many residents, businesses and community venues as possible to superfast broadband. As part of the evaluation of the programme it was noted that for every £1 spent on broadband they received £4 in GVA. This was done by deploying broadband infrastructure and delivering an exemplary take up and demand stimulation scheme. The increased GVA came from the creation of new industries, simplification and

lower cost public service as well as retaining people in the county throughout the year, rather than just in the summer months.

3.4.6 The Swansea Bay City Deal Digital Infrastructure project will focus on improving access and connectivity, through a range of solutions, in both urban and rural areas. Based on the Carmarthenshire superfast broadband availability statistics noted by Openreach (para. 3.4.3), there appears to be a need to increase awareness of availability and supporting take up as well as developing innovative solutions to address the lack of provision on the 14% of Carmarthenshire households who currently do not have access to superfast broadband.

3.4.7 It must also be noted that broadband availability is not the only barrier to connectivity, with digital skills and literacy being raised a number of times as being a significant issue, particularly amongst the older age groups. In their evidence to the Task Group, the Wales Co-operative Centre noted that 18% of Carmarthenshire adults are not regular users of the internet and although there are a number of projects being delivered, such as Digital Heroes and Companies, there is a need to do more in order to ensure people are not digitally isolated.

Recommendations	
22	That the Council urgently works with agencies and through the Swansea Bay City Deal Digital Infrastructure Project to improve broadband infrastructure and connectivity focusing on areas of poor or no connectivity, especially through the 10 Rural Towns programme. Where possible the Council should also develop and implement its own innovative solutions to addressing local need.
23	That the Council improves promotion of grants and support services currently available to businesses and private properties to support their digital connectivity.
24	That the Council works with partners to support the promotion of existing opportunities to develop digital skills and look to introduce additional support where required.



## 3.5 Tourism

- 3.5.1 Tourism has been identified as a significant growth industry for Carmarthenshire as a whole, and in 2017-18 there was an 8% increase in tourism figures for Carmarthenshire, with the sector contributing £434m to the local economy, and in the region of 6,000 jobs annually. The promotion of tourism is not a statutory service for the Council but given the significant economic contribution the sector makes, and has the further potential to make, the Council plays a key role in promoting Carmarthenshire as a destination for the internal Wales and UK markets, as well as internationally through Visit Wales campaigns.
- 3.5.2 This increase in numbers is a positive contribution to the growing sector in Carmarthenshire but it is also recognised that more could be done to develop and promote Carmarthenshire as a destination in itself. There is a significant opportunity to capitalise on the passing trade of visitors making their way to the coastal areas of Pembrokeshire and Ceredigion, but also the internal regional market, both by developing the Carmarthenshire coastal and countryside offering as well as developing the county's rich natural assets in terms of potential open air activities and the all-weather offering within the county.
- 3.5.3 During discussions at the Carmarthenshire Rural Affairs Conference in September 2018 it was felt that there are a number of opportunities that could be taken forward to further develop the tourism sector in Carmarthenshire including:
- Improving collaboration across the whole sector
  - Improving promotion of existing events
  - Working on getting passing trade to stay
  - Developing the open air offer
  - Developing the sense of place - what's unique to Carmarthenshire
- 3.5.3 The [Carmarthenshire Tourism Association](#) is a key partner in supporting the development of the sector in the county. As a member based organisation, which aims to support businesses from all types and sizes involved in the County's visitor economy, they currently have some 250 members and work on the basis that they are 'led by the trade, for the trade'. Collaboration between agencies such as the Association, the Council and Welsh Government will be key in terms of further developing the distinctive offer that Carmarthenshire provides and supporting promotion of the growing tourism opportunities across the county.
- 3.5.4 Supporting development and diversification into the tourism sector will be key to the sustainability of rural communities and in particular enabling additional income into farms as a result of possible Brexit implications. As a result, there needs to be greater flexibility within local planning policy in order to enable and facilitate appropriate development within more rural settlements (as noted in Recommendation 10d in the Planning and Housing Section).

## Recommendations

25	That the Council builds on existing arrangements to work with all interested partners in the tourism sector to create and promote a Carmarthenshire destination offer.
26	That the Council works with all interested partners in the tourism sector and local communities to develop, support and promote a programme of year-round local events/festivals across the County.
27	That the Council works with partners and the private sector to identify opportunities to address the current gap in terms of open air and all-weather provision in the County.

## 3.6 Transport & Highways

- 3.6.1 The county's transport network was referenced a number of times during the Task Group's consideration, and was a key issue raised during the public consultation with many stating that the lack of public transport provision in the county was a barrier to accessing services. There are a number of challenges to consider when providing a public transport service including demand, rurality and population base. We must also take into account that 90% of households in rural areas own a car. As of November 2018, Carmarthenshire had 67 different transport services with only 10 of those operating on a commercial basis, 39 being fully subsidised and 18 being partially subsidised. Therefore, 85% of services in Carmarthenshire are subsidised to some degree, with the average subsidy in Carmarthenshire per passenger journey being £3.63. Due to the low population density, dispersed settlements, topography, time, distance and levels of car ownership and subsequent costs it is virtually impossible to run a purely commercial service in a rural area.
- 3.6.2 The Council has recognised that this is an issue for a number of years and has established the very successful Bwcabus model in parts of the county. This model of connecting passengers to main line bus services to travel has proved to be well received by users and relatively cost efficient because of the demand responsive aspect of delivery. However, this provision is dependent on grant funding to maintain it and although the Council would like to extend the provision to other parts of the county the current funding position means that this will not be possible without additional funding from new sources.
- 3.6.3 In addition, the Task Group heard about the Council's existing 'Country Cars' scheme which is a community based car sharing scheme where volunteers can provide lifts to Carmarthenshire residents who would otherwise be unable to make essential local journeys. It was felt that more should be done to promote this vitally important service to Carmarthenshire residents who need the support.
- 3.6.4 Community transport has been suggested by a number of stakeholders as being a possible way forward in terms of increasing transport provision with the work undertaken by Dolen Teifi being cited as an example of good practice. Dolen Teifi was created by volunteers with the goal of providing sustainable transport to the people who live along the Teifi Valley from Newcastle Emlyn to Llandysul and Llanybydder. Opportunities to further develop this model across other parts of the county, along with possible community pool car schemes, should be considered as possible solutions to the significant transport issues that some of our most remote communities are facing.
- 3.6.5 As part of this, consideration needs to be given to increasing the county's electric charging infrastructure. Due to developments in technology and the drive to reduce carbon emissions, electric car ownership and usage is likely to increase significantly over coming years, Carmarthenshire should invest in its infrastructure now in order to be well positioned to cater for future demand. A number of projects are currently under way or under development within Carmarthenshire, including the installation of 26 double headed charging points at locations across the county. It is felt that the

10 Rural Towns programme provides a good opportunity to ensure a co-ordinated approach to developing provision strategically across the county, ensuring consistent access to charging points at key locations. Through developing this infrastructure and supporting development of the community transport offer there should also be an impact on the county's carbon emissions.

3.6.6 Carmarthenshire has seen a significant investment and surge in its cycling activity over recent years which has numerous benefits in terms of economic, health, environmental and social impacts. Developing a network of offroad cycle paths across the county, based on the Tywi Valley Cycle path project, would be a significant boost to local infrastructure as well as being a draw for cycling tourism in Carmarthenshire. Further development of now redundant railway lines across the county should be considered as a key development opportunity for the future.

3.6.7 Carmarthenshire has over 3,500km of highways and the maintenance costs are substantial. The main routes of the A40, A48 and A483 are the responsibility of Welsh Government and are maintained through external agencies such as the Trunk Road Agency. Unfortunately, due to budgetary cut backs faced by the Council, the Highways service in particular has seen approximately 40% reduction in spending since 2012-13. The Council is proactively seeking any sources of funding available, however a recent audit of all A, B, C and U/C road conditions in the county estimates that an investment of at least £15m is required for the most urgent repairs to those roads. Of the urgent repairs identified, £9m is required for C roads and £4m required for the U/C roads, which are the roads typically providing rural connections. The Council has already obtained an additional £3 million grant funding from Welsh Government for road refurbishment and this has primarily been targeted towards improving the main A and B class roads. This is obviously a significant challenge for the Council to address but the Task Group urge the Council to explore all possible funding options so that the conditions of roads in our rural areas are improved and maintained.

<b>Recommendations</b>	
28	That the Council works with partners to develop community transport opportunities across the county, which should consider all feasible means of transport to address local needs.
29	That the Council works with partners to consider further investment in the electric charging points network across the County with a focus on development of the infrastructure as part of the 10 Rural Towns initiative.
30	That the Council builds upon the approach of the Towy Valley Cycle path by looking into the feasibility of developing additional cycle paths on redundant railway lines across the County.
31	That the Council improves promotion of its Country Cars scheme.
32	To lobby Welsh Government to secure longer-term funding for the successful

	Bwcabus model.
33	That the Council explores all possible funding options to support its highways maintenance programme to ensure that the condition of rural roads are improved.

## 3.7 Agriculture & Food

3.7.1 The continuing uncertainty around the final Brexit deal arrangements is making it very challenging, if not impossible for the agricultural sector and industry to plan appropriately or make any decisions in terms of future policy and approach. However, it is widely recognised that if Brexit does go ahead the agricultural sector will face a significant period of change with Professor Janet Dwyer, in [The Implications of Brexit for Agriculture, Rural Areas and Land Use in Wales](#), noting three key implications of the Brexit process, which will have an impact on UK and Wales policy in terms of agriculture and rural areas:

- a. Trade – the UK must determine its future trading relations with the EU and with third countries outside the EU
- b. Future policy/funding for agriculture and rural areas – the UK and its devolved administrations will determine how much can be afforded for agriculture, environmental management and rural development once the UK leave the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) framework.
- c. Nature of the wider UK post-Brexit governance model and general economic situation, which will affect change in rural areas – current devolution in agri-rural affairs is dependent on a common EU framework covering CAP resources, EU Structural Funding and the provisions of EU legislation on the environment, food safety and consumer welfare. What might replace this?

3.7.2 In July 2018, the Welsh Government published its proposal for a new Land Management Programme which would replace CAP in Wales. The proposal outlined two large and flexible schemes which would replace the current CAP funded schemes (Basic Payment Scheme, Glastir and other parts of the Rural Development Programme). The two new schemes proposed would be an:

- Economic Resilience scheme – investment for economic activities, in particular food and timber production.
- Public Goods scheme – direct support for public goods delivery, in particular for the environment.

Having considered the proposals, and listened to the views of the farming unions, the Council responded to the consultation to convey its concerns that it was felt that the suggested approach represents a significant threat to the diversity of the agricultural sector that we have in Wales and could have a disproportionate impact on smaller-scale agricultural operations and traditional family farms, which are an essential part of the Welsh agricultural sector and rural communities. We await the final proposals once the final Brexit position is clearer.

3.7.3 Despite the significant concerns, there is an element of hope for the Carmarthenshire agricultural sector going forward. Carmarthenshire has a good balance of farm types within the county with the main sector being dairy but with a mixture of sheep, beef,

and a growing poultry sector. This diversity could be a benefit to the agricultural sector in Carmarthenshire compared to other areas which are more dependent on certain types of farms. Business adaptation and survival going forward will be dependent on this diversity and the local conditions to enable and support that diversification.

- 3.7.4 As noted, the dairy sector provides a firm foundation to the agricultural industry in Carmarthenshire with over 470 dairy producers in the county accounting for 28% of all Wales producers. One of the main frustrations noted by a number of stakeholders providing evidence to the Task Group was the fact that the vast majority of milk produced in Carmarthenshire is transported out of the county, and indeed out of Wales for processing. A Welsh Government commissioned study into the feasibility of establishing additional dairy processing capacity in South West Wales in November 2015 came to the conclusion that a new processing facility is unlikely to be affordable in the short term due to the high capital costs and would therefore not be commercially viable. With this in mind, the Task Group would recommend looking into the feasibility of developing a micro/macro milk processing facility which could work to a co-operative model and could build on the already strong foundations for local cheese processing by further developing other markets such as liquid milk/cream, yoghurt and ice cream.
- 3.7.5 In addition to the dairy sector, Carmarthenshire also has a vibrant food production sector with a number of local producers and suppliers catering for local, regional, national and international markets. There is an opportunity to further develop this sector by bringing together the individual food producers to develop a network and brand for foods from Carmarthenshire. This could be closely aligned to the Welsh Government's Food and Drink Wales programme. With the possible implications of Brexit the agricultural sector will need to consider and develop additional means of income through diversification and with the appropriate support and facilitation the food sector is ripe for further development in Carmarthenshire.
- 3.7.6 As part of the Task Group's visit to the Wales Food Centre in Horeb, it was suggested that there is a growing need for medium sized food based business and production units in order to supplement the small incubation units available at Horeb and enable business growth. Local demand and opportunities for development of appropriate units across Carmarthenshire should be further considered.
- 3.7.7 In addition, the Council is working with other public sector partners through the Carmarthenshire Public Services Board (PSB), to review its current food procurement arrangements with a longer term view to, where possible, procure more goods produced locally. This is part of a wider programme the PSB is looking to address through further developing opportunities for the sectors providing those basic goods and services we all use every day such care and health services, food, housing, energy, construction, tourism and retailers on the high street – all of which are considered examples of the foundational economy. This will be a key development

for the rural economy in particular as we look to bolster and further develop the local industries that we rely on day in day out.

- 3.7.8 As part of its evidence to the Task Group both the Farmers’ Union of Wales (FUW) and the National Farmers’ Union (NFU) Cymru noted that the average age of farmers now stands at 61 years of age and there is a concern within the sector about the lack of opportunities for young people and young farmers to join the industry. With land prices and set-up costs, any new starter coming into the industry requires a substantial capital investment to establish themselves. Succession planning is therefore key and Farming Connect provide a range of support and tools to facilitate this. In addition, Farming Connect run the [Mentor / Venture](#) programme which looks to identify and support joint farming ventures in Wales. This is an approach that needs to be further developed across Wales and particularly in Carmarthenshire.
- 3.7.9 The agricultural sector makes a significant contribution to the Carmarthenshire economy with the NFU referring to a 2017 report by Development Economics which notes that for every £1 invested in farm support, farming delivers £7.40 back to the economy through the purchase of goods such as animal feed, vets, machinery, local contractors, food etc. In addition to the economic contribution, the sector plays an important role in the shape of rural communities. Farming provides the backbone to many rural communities, many of those being predominantly Welsh speaking communities and there is a concern that if the agricultural sector is as adversely affected by Brexit as some fear, this could have a seriously detrimental effect on the resilience and future sustainability of many rural communities, not just in Carmarthenshire but across Wales and the UK.

Recommendations	
34	That the Council works with partners to look into the feasibility of developing co-operation led milk processing facilities within Carmarthenshire on a micro/macro basis and agrees a way forward once the findings are known.
35	That the Council works with partners to look into the feasibility of developing a Carmarthenshire brand for locally produced food.
36	That the Council fully engages with the Carmarthenshire Public Services Board programme which is looking to develop opportunities for public sector procurement of locally produced and supplied food as well as ways the public sector can support local food producers to establish, develop and grow their businesses. If this approach is deemed successful and appropriate it could be extended to enable local procurement of other public sector goods and services which will in turn support the Carmarthenshire pound.
37	That the Council considers demand and opportunities for the development of medium sized food based business and production units.
38	That the Council works with and supports other agencies, especially through the



	Farming Connect Mentro / Venture programme, to support the promotion and development of opportunities for shared farming type initiatives.
39	<p>To lobby Welsh Government to ensure that any post Brexit funding programmes established to replace the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Fully respects the agricultural sector’s diversity whilst reflecting the economic, social, environmental and cultural contribution the sector makes to rural communities as a whole;</li> <li>b. Does not have a disproportionately negative impact on smaller-scale agricultural operations and traditional family farms</li> <li>c. Responds to the need for economic growth and is more closely aligned to wider Welsh Government economic and skills development plans.</li> </ol> <p>We would also ask that the Welsh Government re-considers its plans to withdraw direct payments in the future which could destabilise the industry in Wales as it sets Wales apart from the approach of other countries who would be direct industry competitors.</p>
40	Once the Brexit position is known, that the Council works with partners to consider opportunities to enhance an internal Carmarthenshire/Wales/UK market for beef, lamb, poultry and pork produce.

## 3.8 Community Resilience, Access to Services & Third Sector

- 3.8.1 Carmarthenshire continues to have a vibrant community, social and third sector network, although it must be recognised that these communities are continuously evolving with changing needs. There needs to be a greater recognition of the important role and contribution that community based organisations, predominantly run by volunteers, make to the resilience and essence of local communities.
- 3.8.2 In recent years, Carmarthenshire has seen a net migration loss in the 15-29 age group and an in migration increase in the 30-65+ age group. On average over the last 5 years Carmarthenshire has seen a net migration loss of 340 people in the 15-29 age group and during the same period an in migration gain of an average of 598 people in the 30-65+ age group. This supports the recognised trend in Carmarthenshire of an ageing population but also has possible implications from a community resilience and cohesion perspective which need to be considered. The importance of our community networks and support structures are therefore key to supporting future population needs. Cultural and linguistic sensitivities must also be recognised with 50.2% of the population in the rural wards speaking Welsh, higher than the county wide average of 43.9%. Developments such as the 'Welcome to Carmarthenshire' pack are important to ensure that the importance of the Welsh language in Carmarthenshire is conveyed to people moving into the county as early as possible so that they may be encouraged to learn the language.
- 3.8.3 One of the community based organisations that was highlighted by a number of stakeholders as being key to rural community life was the [Carmarthenshire Young Farmers' Clubs \(YFC\) Federation](#). With 23 active clubs across Carmarthenshire and over 800 members between the ages of 10-26 and hundreds of voluntary leaders, trainers and supporters, the YFC plays a significant role in creating a sense of community pride and belonging, with all clubs contributing significantly to the vibrancy of their local community. The organisation also has a key part in addressing de-population of young people as the bond created between members and their communities is continuously noted as a factor in young people wanting to remain in the county or return home. The structure of the organisation also plays a significant role in developing the skills and experiences of its members to become future community leaders, something that is very much needed if our rural communities are to continue to thrive. The Task Group feels that the Council could do more to work alongside the YFC to support and engage their members as community champions or connectors going forward.
- 3.8.4 With public sector services facing on-going change over coming years the role that the third sector can play is also likely to increase from a service provision perspective. The [Carmarthenshire Association of Voluntary Services](#) and [Wales Co-operative Centre](#) both identified opportunities in their presentations to the Task Group for further development of the sector through social enterprise and cooperatives especially to support entrepreneurship in a business sense and social inclusion from a community sense. The Council is already considering this in certain services but there

needs to be a greater focus and drive in terms of taking this forward. This approach could also be utilised for further community initiatives and services which could be considered the foundational economy sectors such as local food production and supply, rural community pubs and shops, leisure services etc. This should be a key consideration for the 10 Rural Towns initiative.

- 3.8.5 A number of stakeholders reflected on their growing concerns in terms of social and community issues relating to loneliness and isolation, which seem to be compounded when living in rural areas. This was recognised across all factions of the community but seems to be a particular issue within the agricultural sector due to the working patterns, with long hours and usually lone working. Community networks are essential in responding to these cross county issues but in rural areas in particular, due to the lack of transport and access to services, virtual networks can also be a solution. The Task Group were pleased to hear about a project being developed by the West Wales Care Partnership which is looking to address some of these issues by using the latest technology as part of a person-centred, responsive model of care and support through proactive interaction with individuals. This project is based on a successful model implemented in Bilbao, Spain where social media is used to develop strong online community networks which can then develop to becoming strong networks within the community.
- 3.8.6 It was also noted that rural crime was recognised as being a growing concern in the area with Dyfed Powys Police publishing their first [Rural Crime Strategy](#) in 2017. The main issues relating to Carmarthenshire have tended to focus on theft of sheep, quad bikes, gates, trailers and other farm equipment. In 2017/18 the value of items stolen from rural Carmarthenshire was just over £97,000. The Council needs to work with and support the Police in any way possible to respond to these issues so that Carmarthenshire’s rural communities are proactive and well prepared in order to reduce such speculative crime.

Recommendations	
41	That the Council works with partners to develop the approach and use of social enterprises as a potential model for delivery of community led projects and services across the County.
42	That the Council works with partners to develop a more co-ordinated approach to identifying, supporting and developing volunteering across the County.
43	That the Council works with Carmarthenshire Young Farmers Clubs Federation to ensure a closer working relationship and support structure in the future.
44	That the Council works with partners and communities to respond to issues relating to loneliness and isolation.
45	That the Council works with Dyfed Powys Police to address rural crime issues affecting the county and to monitor any trends in terms of community cohesion issues.

46	That the Council revisits the delivery model for leisure facilities and services in rural areas with a view to creating a sustainable and accessible service provision in the future. This should be linked with the Ten Rural Towns programme.
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## 3.9 Renewable Energy

- 3.9.1 Carmarthenshire is well placed to develop its renewable energy output with opportunities for hydro, solar and wind developments across the county. There will need to be a collective effort across the public, private and community sectors in order to enable this to happen with a more flexible approach required in order to deliver change. Whilst recognising some of the challenges this may bring, there is also a recognised need, supported by the national and local coverage for the need to respond to the climate emergency, to change the current approach and be more aspirational in terms of local development and provision.
- 3.9.2 In February 2019 the Council made a commitment to be a net zero carbon authority by 2030, and an action plan to deliver on this commitment is currently being developed. The Council has a significant property and land portfolio and has already introduced some schemes in terms of solar and wind energy generation. However, more can be done and a review of the possible options for delivery is currently underway. Part of this process will require the Council to generate more energy from renewable sources and to also take action to off-set the carbon emissions it cannot prevent. The Council will look to work with other public sector bodies, through the Public Services Board, to respond to this challenge and ensure it achieves its commitment.
- 3.9.3 There is also a need to increase and support the development of community energy schemes within the county. As well as providing smart and clean energy solutions, there is a means of ensuring profit is kept and re-invested in the local area and saves the local community money. [Carmarthenshire Energy](#) gave evidence to the Task Group and outlined some of the projects they are already delivering within the county and that there is potential and interest to deliver far more.

### Recommendations

47	That the Council works with partners to improve promotion of opportunities to increase development and use of renewable energy in the private, public and community sectors.
48	That the Council works with partners to support the development of community energy schemes.
49	That the Council looks to increase the use of renewable energy sources to supply Council properties.

## 3.10 Environment & Waste

- 3.10.1 Carmarthenshire is an area known for its outstanding natural beauty, from its beaches and coastline, to its agricultural and post-industrial valleys and forestry and mountain tops, the county's natural environment is one of its greatest assets.
- 3.10.2 It is however recognised that this environment is changing and in February 2019 the Council declared a climate emergency and committed to making Carmarthenshire County Council a net zero carbon local authority by 2030. Work is in progress to develop and implement an action plan for the Council and the Task Group fully supports this approach and encourages the Council to work with other partners to take collective action.
- 3.10.3 The Task Group received evidence from a number of stakeholders about the growing concern relating to water pollution incidents in Carmarthenshire, with Natural Resources Wales (NRW) stating that there were 81 confirmed water pollution incidents in Carmarthenshire during 2018. A breakdown of the source of the pollution is as follows:

Premises	Count
On-going investigations to confirm source	2
Agriculture	35
Domestic & Residential	8
Manufacturing	4
Other	1
Premise Not Identified (unable to identify source)	16
Service Sector (e.g. garages, restaurants, electricity companies etc)	3
Transport	3
Water Industry	9

- 3.10.4 Whilst acknowledging the numerous different sources of these incidents, the high numbers of incidents sourced from the agriculture sector must be recognised. However, it must also be recognised that there are a total of 475 dairy farms in Carmarthenshire (as of April 2018) accounting for 28% of the all Wales dairy sector, and whilst the number of agricultural incidents in Carmarthenshire are high, largely due to a small minority of polluters, the vast majority of farmers are very much aware of their responsibility towards protecting our environment and it would therefore be unfair to tarnish the whole dairy sector with the same brush. It is recognised that Farming Connect and NRW provide support, advice and guidance to farmers to take action to prevent pollution and this needs to be adequately resourced. The Council is also committed to support initiatives such as 'Taclu'r Tywi' which will engage with all interested parties to produce a practical plan for the future management of the river Tywi, and would encourage this approach to resolve any issues on other rivers across the county as necessary. It is also important to recognise that a large proportion of the sources of incidents are from situations other than

agriculture, and the same level of intervention needs to be focused on these areas to address and avoid future pollution incidents.

- 3.10.5 Despite these actions, there is a clear need to target interventions in Carmarthenshire to address all causes of water pollution and we would urge Welsh Government to fund and support direct action in Carmarthenshire, working with local organisations to address the issues currently faced. Some suggestions put forward to the Task Group include funding to support liming of land, capital investment to develop slurry lagoons and pits, and measures to stop rain water accessing the pits etc. Addressing the issues head on in Carmarthenshire could provide a model for future delivery which could prevent the introduction of further regulations on the sector.
- 3.10.6 The Task Group is very supportive of the £10m [Prosiect Slyri](#) that Coleg Sir Gâr is developing with partners which is working to develop a dewatering and purification system to manage slurry on farms. This could be a significant development for the sector in addressing this issue in the future.
- 3.10.7 The Task Group also received information about the proposed NVZ regulations that Welsh Government are planning to introduce which would restrict the period available for spreading slurry to a set schedule within the year. Whilst recognising the need to take action to address the issue the Task Group feel that the initial focus of any direct intervention should be on the known and repeat offenders of slurry mismanagement, rather than impose sanctions on all farmers. There is a concern that the lack of flexibility in the proposed regulations to accommodate periods of weather suitable for the spread of slurry outside of the fixed timeframe could lead to greater pollution if spreading is intensified within the fixed timeframe when the weather may be unfavourable for spreading.
- 3.10.8 Air quality in Carmarthenshire is continuously monitored and according to the 2018 Air Quality Progress Report for the county the main air quality pollutant relevant to Carmarthenshire is Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) and the main source of NO<sub>2</sub> emissions in the county is road traffic. Within Carmarthenshire's rural areas there are currently two Air Quality Management Areas, one in Llandeilo and one in Carmarthen. The Council has prepared detailed action plans to manage and work towards addressing the issues in partnership with a number of agencies. This is something the Advisory Panel, if agreed to be established, would be keen to consider in more detail moving forward.
- 3.10.9 There was also a significant concern from a number of stakeholders about the impact of flytipping in rural areas. The cleanliness and appearance of an area contributes greatly to community pride and sense of place and can have an impact in terms of tourism prospects. However, there were specific concerns in relation to flytipping in rural areas as it can be seen as an easy dumping ground and it being particularly unfair in terms of private landowners having to incur the cost of removing any waste illegally dumped on their land. It was felt that further work needs to be undertaken with communities and enforcement agencies to tackle this issue going forward.

## Recommendations

50	To lobby Welsh Government to fund and support direct action in Carmarthenshire working in partnership with local farmers and organisations to address the water pollution issues currently faced.
51	To lobby Welsh Government to re-consider the introduction of the proposed NVZ regulations (aimed at improving water quality by restricting the period available for spreading slurry) and focus direct intervention on repeat offenders of slurry mismanagement rather than impose sanctions on all farmers.
52	That the Council works with local communities to address fly tipping and waste management issues in rural areas, and monitors the impact of recently introduced changes at the Council's recycling centres and landfill sites in terms of levels of fly tipping in rural areas.



## 3.11 The Way Forward

- 3.11.1 The Task Group very much welcomed the report published by Eluned Morgan AM in 2017 'Rural Wales: Time to Meet the Challenge 2025', however the lack of progress in further developing the suggestions put forward is disappointing. The Task Group very much support the call for the development of a specific plan for rural Wales and in the absence of a national drive on this the Task Group believe that the Council should lead on this work in Carmarthenshire. However, given that most rural areas across Wales are facing similar challenges there is a clear opportunity for Welsh Government to take forward this development nationally to ensure a more strategic approach.
- 3.11.2 On that basis the Council should facilitate continuation of the discussion with interested parties and stakeholders that the work of this Task Group has started to develop. Many attendees of the Carmarthenshire rural affairs conference in September 2018 noted the benefit of bringing together representatives from differing backgrounds but all with an interest in the development of rural Carmarthenshire. This type of engagement and collaboration should continue as an action plan to deliver the recommendations of this report is prepared but also to further the conversation and develop other possible solutions for the challenges faced by rural communities.
- 3.11.3 The Task Group also feel that there is a need to improve knowledge and understanding of rural issues at a national level, especially within Welsh Government. A number of stakeholders who gave evidence to the Task Group noted a sense of frustration at the all too often 'one size fits all' approach expected through national policies and guidance. There is very little recognition of the challenges, pressures and logistics of planning and providing services in rural communities. If our rural communities are to survive and thrive this approach needs to change and the Task Group believe that having a specific national focus through a rural plan or rural deal would be a good way of addressing this. There are significant opportunities for rural development, but all stakeholders need to work together to meet the challenges that rural Carmarthenshire and rural Wales face.

### Recommendations

53	To lobby Welsh Government to ensure it gives sufficient focus and resources to the specific needs of rural communities in Carmarthenshire, building on the approach established through 'Rural Wales: Time to Meet the Challenge 2025' and working regionally where appropriate through a potential rural deal.
54	That the Council facilitates an on-going discussion with interested parties and stakeholders to ensure delivery and further development of the Council's rural affairs strategy, working in a multi-agency and multi-sector way.
55	To lobby Welsh Government and other national agencies to improve understanding of the challenges, pressures and logistics of planning and providing services in a rural community and to revisit its definition of deprivation to better reflect issues relating to rurality.

## 4 Conclusions & Next Steps

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- 4.1.1 The Task Group put forward these findings and recommendations following consideration of a wide range of issues facing rural communities. Many of the recommendations presented will not require additional funding to deliver as they suggest a different approach or new way of doing things. However, it is recognised that this will require officer capacity and support to implement. Where appropriate, an indication of likely costs for delivering those recommendations that will require a funding investment have been outlined in the Appendix A. With many of the recommendations, the detailed costs of implementation will be unknown until the recommendation is further developed. In those instances, a detailed business case will need to be prepared and re-submitted for Executive Board consideration at a later date.
- 4.1.2 Once the report and recommendations is considered by the Executive Board and Council, an action plan to ensure progress in implementing the approved recommendations should be prepared and monitored over the next 12-months. It is intended that the approved recommendations are embedded into the corporate and departmental business plans of the Council for implementation.
- 4.1.3 In order to monitor progress in delivering the approved recommendations it is suggested that the Task Group is maintained in an Advisory Panel status to the Executive Board Member for Rural Affairs. In addition to monitoring progress, the Advisory Panel should also consider and review the possible implications of Brexit on rural communities once they become clearer and consider any other matters that influence rural communities as they arise.

## 5 Appendices

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### a. Estimated costs of implementing recommendations

Many of the recommendations presented will not require additional funding to deliver as they suggest a different approach or new way of doing things. However, it is recognised that this will require officer capacity and support to implement. Where appropriate, an indication of likely costs for delivering those recommendations that will require a funding investment have been outlined below. With many of the recommendations, the detailed costs of implementation will be unknown until the recommendation is further developed. In those instances, we ask that support in principle is given at this stage and a detailed business case will need to be prepared and re-submitted for Executive Board consideration at a later date.

Recommendations	Estimated Cost
<p>1 That the Council works with the local communities and stakeholders in ten of its rural towns (and surrounding communities) to develop individual plans that will aim to provide a long-term strategic vision to secure economic, cultural, social and environmental sustainability for those towns. The proposed ten rural towns are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Llandovery</li> <li>ii. St Clears</li> <li>iii. Whitland</li> <li>iv. Newcastle Emlyn</li> <li>v. Laugharne</li> <li>vi. Cwmamman (Amman Valley)</li> <li>vii. Llanybydder</li> <li>viii. Kidwelly (Gwendraeth)</li> </ul>	<p>£170K grant funding identified to undertake preparation of growth plans for 8 of the 10 towns.</p> <p>Additional £50K required to complete first phase.</p>

Recommendations		Estimated Cost
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ix. Llandeilo</li> <li>x. Cross Hands.</li> </ul>	
2	That the Council continues to implement existing funding opportunities for rural development and identify external public and private sector funding opportunities to assist with the economic growth aspirations of the ten rural towns and the county's rural businesses.	No direct costs – officer capacity to deliver
3	That the Council ensures a focus on the further development of the Foundational Economy sector within Carmarthenshire whilst supporting the principles of the Circular Economy.	No direct costs – officer capacity to deliver
4	That the Council works to enable the re-use of vacant or unused buildings on agricultural land and within rural towns and villages to develop business incubator or commercial accommodation in rural areas.	Costs to be determined once opportunities identified and plans developed
5	That the Council maintains its rural estate but reviews its use and policy going forward, whilst also working with other public sector partners to identify development opportunities through their rural estate.	No direct costs – officer capacity to deliver
6	That the Council continues to make grant funding available to support the growth aspirations of the county's entrepreneurs and rural businesses whilst exploring the feasibility of establishing a local private sector loan fund.	Grant funding available through existing programmes. Officer capacity to deliver
7	That the Council works with other business support agencies and services (e.g. Business Wales, Business in Focus, Farming Connect etc) to enable greater clustering of support and signposting to local businesses.	No direct costs – officer capacity to deliver
8	<p>To lobby Welsh Government to amend national planning policy, and in particular</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. TAN 6 to enable a more flexible approach to development in rural areas, especially in areas outside of identified settlements, and</li> <li>b. TAN 20 in terms of ensuring the impact of any development on the Welsh language is required as a</li> </ul>	No direct costs – officer capacity to deliver

Recommendations		Estimated Cost
	material consideration, as stipulated in the Planning Act 2015 and that its status in legislation is reflected in the TAN.	
9	To lobby Welsh Government to amend planning policy (as part of TAN 6) in relation to the construction of a second dwelling on established farms as the current requirements relating to demonstration of income from the farm to enable development is no longer valid. Given the current and future changing nature of agriculture and possible implications of Brexit, income from the farm will have to be supplemented with income from other sources i.e. extended family members taking up employment outside of the farm setting. Therefore, the total income of the household, as a family unit, needs to be considered rather than farm income alone.	No direct costs – officer capacity to deliver
10	That the Council ensures that the revised Local Development Plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. enables appropriate scale residential and business development in smaller community areas as needed</li> <li>b. enables appropriate tenure mix in residential developments, based on local housing need</li> <li>c. enables the appropriate allocation of affordable homes within rural areas</li> <li>d. enables tourism and business development in rural areas to support future development and diversification.</li> </ul>	No direct costs – officer capacity to deliver
11	That the Council amends its planning policy to enable the citing of a new/re-developed farmhouse or dwelling linked to an agricultural property so that it can be located a reasonable distance outside of the working farm yard in order to ensure due regard can be given to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Health and safety considerations;</li> <li>b. Biosecurity; and</li> <li>c. Lessen the risk of zoonotic diseases (diseases that can be transferred between people and animals e.g. TB).</li> </ul>	No direct costs – officer capacity to deliver
12	That the Council looks into the feasibility of enabling the establishment/creation of new small-holdings in	No direct costs – officer

Recommendations		Estimated Cost
	rural areas, outside identified settlements on the basis of local need and the potential positive contribution to the economic, social, cultural and environmental sustainability of the local community.	capacity to deliver
13	That the Council continues to support and further develop its ambitious Carmarthenshire Affordable Homes Delivery Plan post 2020 to ensure the continuation of increased availability of affordable homes within the county and ensure the proposals for building new Council houses reflect local housing needs in rural areas.	Costs to be determined once plans developed
14	<p>That the Council considers the recommendations of the Education &amp; Children's Services Scrutiny Committee Task and Finish 'A review of the current provision for early year's education, childcare and play opportunities' to be published in 2019 which include recommendations focused on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The availability and provision of childcare across the county but especially in the rural areas</li> <li>b. Supporting the childcare sector to increase the availability and provision of Welsh medium childcare across the county</li> <li>c. The availability of after school clubs and wrap around care provision through schools</li> <li>d. Reviewing the Council's admissions policy for full-time education for 4 year olds</li> <li>e. Ensuring all parents and carers receive information about the benefit of Welsh medium education and bilingualism</li> <li>f. Supporting schools and local partners to develop a model which would enable community use of school play facilities outside of school hours.</li> </ul> <p>The recommendations would have a significant impact on provision and access to childcare and play opportunities in rural areas as well as supporting the principle of building the future resilience and sustainability of rural schools.</p>	To be determined as part of the Task & Finish Review
15	That the Council remains fully supportive of doing all that it can to support and build the future resilience and sustainability of its rural schools, and will work to Welsh Government's set of procedures and requirements within the School Organisation Code which works on a presumption against closure.	Costs to be determined on a case by case basis

Recommendations		Estimated Cost
16	That the Council continues with the progress being made in moving all primary and secondary schools along the continuum in terms of increasing Welsh medium provision.	No direct costs – officer capacity to deliver
17	That the Council, through the Swansea Bay City Deal and Regional Learning and Skills Partnership Skills and Talent Project, look to increase careers input at a younger age in schools to inspire and raise aspirations in terms of local employment and entrepreneurship opportunities.	No direct costs. Project being implemented through RLSP.
18	That the Council works with Coleg Sir Gâr to consider options for the development of a rural innovation, technology and skills hub model across the county which would work to address the skills shortage in certain sectors focussing on work based/vocational skills.	Costs to be determined once options identified
19	That the Council develops a suite of placement/work experience opportunities with local businesses in order to increase local awareness of career options.	No direct costs – officer capacity to deliver
20	That the Council works with partners to develop a tracking system for young people leaving Carmarthenshire for education and employment opportunities with a view to signposting them to employment opportunities to enable them to return to Carmarthenshire.	Costs to be determined once options identified. Project being considered by RLSP
21	That the Council works with partners to undertake further mapping work on the possible implications of Brexit on certain workforce sectors across the county.	No direct costs. Project being implemented through RLSP
22	That the Council urgently works with agencies and through the Swansea Bay City Deal Digital Infrastructure Project to improve broadband infrastructure and connectivity focusing on areas of poor or no connectivity, especially through the 10 Rural Towns programme. Where possible the Council should also develop and implement its own innovative solutions to addressing local need.	Costs to be determined on a case by case basis
23	That the Council improves promotion of grants and support services currently available to businesses and	No direct costs – officer

Recommendations		Estimated Cost
	private properties to support their digital connectivity.	capacity to deliver
24	That the Council works with partners to support the promotion of existing opportunities to develop digital skills and look to introduce additional support where required.	No direct costs – officer capacity to deliver
25	That the Council builds on existing arrangements to work with all interested partners in the tourism sector to create and promote a Carmarthenshire destination offer.	No direct costs initially – officer capacity to develop. Costs to be determined once opportunities identified.
26	That the Council works with all interested partners in the tourism sector and local communities to develop, support and promote a programme of year-round local events/festivals across the County.	No direct costs initially – officer capacity to develop. Costs to be determined once opportunities identified.
27	That the Council works with partners and the private sector to identify opportunities to address the current gap in terms of open air and all-weather provision in the County.	No direct costs – officer capacity to develop. Costs to be determined once opportunities identified.
28	That the Council works with partners to develop community transport opportunities across the county, which should consider all feasible means of transport to address local needs.	No direct costs – officer capacity to develop. Costs to be determined once opportunities identified.
29	That the Council works with partners to consider further investment in the electric charging points network	LEADER funding



Recommendations		Estimated Cost
	across the County with a focus on development of the infrastructure as part of the 10 Rural Towns initiative.	identified to plan and develop infrastructure
30	That the Council builds upon the approach of the Tywi Valley Cycle path by looking into the feasibility of developing additional cycle paths on redundant railway lines across the County.	Feasibility study to be undertaken. Costs of delivery to be established.
31	That the Council improves promotion of its Country Cars scheme.	No direct costs – officer capacity to deliver.
32	To lobby Welsh Government to secure longer-term funding for the successful Bwcabus model.	No direct costs – officer capacity to deliver.
33	That the Council explores all possible funding options to support its highways maintenance programme to ensure that the condition of rural roads are improved.	Estimated £15m required for most urgent repairs (across the county). £3m secured to date through WG grant.
34	That the Council works with partners to look into the feasibility of developing co-operation led milk processing facilities within Carmarthenshire on a micro/macro basis and agrees a way forward once the findings are known.	Feasibility study to be undertaken. Costs of delivery to be established.
35	That the Council works with partners to look into the feasibility of developing a ‘Bwyd Sir Gâr’ brand for locally produced food.	Feasibility study to be undertaken. Costs of delivery to be established.

	Recommendations	Estimated Cost
36	That the Council fully engages with the Carmarthenshire Public Services Board programme which is looking to develop opportunities for public sector procurement of locally produced and supplied food as well as ways the public sector can support local food producers to establish, develop and grow their businesses. If this approach is deemed successful and appropriate it could be extended to enable local procurement of other public sector goods and services which will in turn support the Carmarthenshire pound.	Funding for initial mapping work identified. PSB leading grant application to support further development.
37	That the Council considers demand and opportunities for the development of medium sized food based business and production units.	Feasibility study to be undertaken. Costs of delivery to be established.
38	That the Council works with and supports other agencies, especially through the Farming Connect Mentro / Venture programme, to support the promotion and development of opportunities for shared farming type initiatives.	No direct costs – officer capacity to deliver.
39	<p>To lobby Welsh Government to ensure that any post Brexit funding programmes established to replace the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Fully respects the agricultural sector’s diversity whilst reflecting the economic, social, environmental and cultural contribution the sector makes to rural communities as a whole;</li> <li>b. Does not have a disproportionately negative impact on smaller-scale agricultural operations and traditional family farms</li> <li>c. Responds to the need for economic growth and is more closely aligned to wider Welsh Government economic and skills development plans.</li> </ul> <p>We would also ask that the Welsh Government re-considers its plans to withdraw direct payments in the future which could destabilise the industry in Wales as it sets Wales apart from the approach of other countries who would be direct industry competitors.</p>	No direct costs – officer capacity to deliver.

Recommendations		Estimated Cost
40	Once the Brexit position is known, that the Council works with partners to consider opportunities to enhance an internal Carmarthenshire/Wales/UK market for beef, lamb and pork produce.	No direct costs – officer capacity to develop. Costs to be determined once opportunities identified.
41	That the Council works with partners to develop the approach and use of social enterprises as a potential model for delivery of community led projects and services across the County.	No direct costs – officer capacity to develop. Costs to be determined once opportunities identified.
42	That the Council works with partners to develop a more co-ordinated approach to identifying, supporting and developing volunteering across the County.	No direct costs – officer capacity to deliver.
43	That the Council works with Carmarthenshire Young Farmers Clubs Federation to ensure a closer working relationship and support structure in the future.	Costs to be determined once opportunities identified.
44	That the Council works with partners and communities to respond to issues relating to loneliness and isolation.	Costs to be determined once opportunities identified.
45	That the Council works with Dyfed Powys Police to address rural crime issues affecting the county and to monitor any trends in terms of community cohesion issues.	No direct costs – officer capacity to deliver.
46	That the Council revisits the delivery model for leisure facilities and services in rural areas with a view to creating a sustainable and accessible service provision in the future. This should be linked with the Ten Rural Towns programme.	Costs to be determined once opportunities identified.

Recommendations		Estimated Cost
47	That the Council works with partners to improve promotion of opportunities to increase development and use of renewable energy in the private, public and community sectors.	No direct costs initially – officer capacity to develop. Costs to be determined once opportunities identified.
48	That the Council works with partners to support the development of community energy schemes.	No direct costs – officer capacity to develop. Costs to be determined once opportunities identified.
49	That the Council looks to increase the use of renewable energy sources to supply Council properties.	No direct costs – officer capacity to develop. Costs to be determined once opportunities identified.
50	To lobby Welsh Government to fund and support direct action in Carmarthenshire working with local organisations to address the water pollution issues currently faced.	No direct costs – officer capacity to deliver.
51	To lobby Welsh Government to re-consider the introduction of the proposed NVZ regulations (aimed at improving water quality by restricting the period available for spreading slurry) and focus direct intervention on repeat offenders of slurry mismanagement rather than impose sanctions on all farmers.	No direct costs – officer capacity to deliver.
52	That the Council works with local communities to address fly tipping and waste management issues in rural areas, and monitors the impact of recently introduced changes at the Council’s recycling centres and landfill sites in terms of levels of fly tipping in rural areas.	No direct costs – officer capacity to deliver.
53	To lobby Welsh Government to ensure it gives sufficient focus and resources to the specific needs of rural	No direct costs – officer

Recommendations		Estimated Cost
	communities in Carmarthenshire, working regionally where appropriate through a potential rural deal.	capacity to deliver.
54	That the Council facilitates an on-going discussion with interested parties and stakeholders to ensure delivery and further development of the Council's rural affairs strategy, working in a multi-agency and multi-sector way.	No direct costs – officer capacity to deliver.
55	To lobby Welsh Government and other national agencies to improve understanding of the challenges, pressures and logistics of planning and providing services in a rural community and to revisit its definition of deprivation to better reflect issues relating to rurality.	No direct costs – officer capacity to deliver.

## **b. Carmarthenshire Rural Affairs Task Group Terms of Reference**

### **Aim**

To consider the issues effecting the rural communities in Carmarthenshire and to identify actions the Council, in partnership with other public bodies and organisations, can take in addressing those issues to ensure and support rural regeneration in future years.

### **Objectives**

- Interpret and analyse any relevant national, county and ward level information, data and research identifying any key issues that have a local effect.
- To consult with and take evidence from as wide a range as possible of stakeholders with an interest in rural affairs to identify the particular issues effecting Carmarthenshire's rural communities.
- To consider the findings of recent and current national reviews into rural affairs undertaken by Welsh Government or any other organisations as appropriate.
- To agree a way forward to addressing rural regeneration in Carmarthenshire.

### **Membership**

In addition to the Chair, the cross-party group will consist of nine elected members. The group to confirm representatives as follows:

- Three Plaid Cymru Group representatives;
- Three Independent Group representatives;
- Three Labour Group representatives.

### **Task Group Arrangements**

- The Task Group will be chaired by the Executive Board Member with responsibility for Rural Affairs.
- The Task Group will meet on a monthly basis for the first six months and will be reviewed thereafter.
- The Task Group will report its findings establishment to the Council within 12-18 months of its.
- The Group will be supported by the Corporate Policy & Partnership Manager and officers from the Regeneration and Policy Division, Chief Executive's Department.

c. Stakeholders, partners and interested parties that have presented information and suggestions to the Task Group

Date of meeting	Attendance
21 <sup>st</sup> November 2017	Llinos Quelch, Head of Planning and Ian Llewelyn, Forward Planning Manager provided an overview of planning matters.
	Robin Staines, Head of Housing and Public Protection provided an overview of housing matters.
19 <sup>th</sup> December 2017	Jane Lewis, Regional Learning & Skills Partnership Manager provided a presentation on growth industries, future skills requirements and learning requirements.
	Stuart Walters, Economic Development Manager provided an overview of current economic activity in Carmarthenshire.
	Rhian Phillips, Economic Development Area Manager provided information on available funding.
22 <sup>nd</sup> January 2018	A presentation was received by Barry Liles, John Owen, David Davies, Mary Richards and Mike Williams from Coleg Sir Gâr.
	Tony Loizou, Creighton Harvey and David Saywell from the Carmarthenshire Fishermen's Federation and Frank Jones from the West Wales Rivers Trust attended the meeting.
19 <sup>th</sup> February 2018	A presentation was received by Aled Davies and Bronwen Gardener from NFU Cymru.
	David Waters, County Executive Officer and Ian Rickman, South Wales Vice President provided a presentation on behalf of FUW.
26 <sup>th</sup> March 2018	Ed Hunt, West Director of Next Generation Access for Openreach provided an update on the latest progress and next steps with Superfast Broadband roll-out.
9 <sup>th</sup> April 2018	Visit to Food Centre Wales in Horeb where a presentation was received by Arwyn Davies, Business Development Manager.
21 <sup>st</sup> May 2018	Mike Galvin, Digital Lead for Swansea Bay City Deal, provided a presentation on the Digital Infrastructure Project. Also attended by Ed Hunt, Wales Director of Next Generation Access for Openreach and Tony Morgan, Local Full Fibre Network Lead for Openreach.
	A presentation was received by Chief Inspector Steve Thomas on

	the Dyfed Powys Police Rural Crime Strategy.
9 <sup>th</sup> July 2018	Eirwen Williams, Director and Carys Thomas, South West Regional Manager of Menter a Busnes provided a presentation on the support they provide.
7 <sup>th</sup> September 2018	Rural Affairs Conference
5 <sup>th</sup> November 2018	Cllr Peter Hughes Griffiths, Executive Board Member for Culture, Sport and Tourism and Deina Hockenhull, Media and Marketing Manager provided a presentation on the tourism service.
	Nia Ball, Chief Executive and George Reid, Chairman of Carmarthenshire Tourism Association provided a presentation.
20 <sup>th</sup> November 2018	Stephen Pilliner, Head of Transport & Highways
	Ian Llewelyn, Forward Planning Manager provided an update on the Local Development Plan
10 <sup>th</sup> December 2018	Huwel Manley, Operations Manager West and Ioan Williams, Carmarthenshire Team Manager, Natural Resources Wales
	Neil Lewis, Manager and Cara Hope, Energy Local Co-ordinator, Carmarthenshire Energy
5 <sup>th</sup> February 2019	Gareth Morgans, Director of Education and Children, Simon Davies, Head of Access to Education and Lisa Grice, Childcare & Play Sufficiency Manager, Carmarthenshire County Council
	Marie Mitchell, Chief Executive, and Clare Pilborough, Engagement Officer, Carmarthenshire Association of Voluntary Services
	Marc Davies, Project Manager Digital Communities Wales, Wales Co-operative Centre
9 <sup>th</sup> April 2019	Dr. Mark Lang, Cardiff University provided a presentation on his Llandovery Place Review
	Jake Morgan, Director of Community Services and Rhian Dawson, Carmarthenshire County Director for Hywel Dda University Health Board provided information of the rural care.
1 <sup>st</sup> May 2019	Endaf Griffiths provided a summary of statistical work undertaken by Wavehill.
	The meeting was attended by Nigel Williams, Castell Howell, Simon Wright, Wright's Food Emporium and Ian Hussell, Record Industrial Brushes to obtain the perspective of the Business Sector.





# **Rural Affairs Consultation Report 2018**

# **CARMARTHENSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

## **RURAL AFFAIRS CONSULTATION**

### **INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT**

Carmarthenshire County Council has established a cross-party Task Group to consider the issues effecting rural communities in Carmarthenshire. The aim is to identify actions the Council, in partnership with other public bodies and organisations, can take in addressing the issues raised to ensure and support rural regeneration in future years. The survey conducted from the end of November 2017 to the end of April 2018 sought the view of residents and stakeholders on the matters that are important to secure the future prosperity of our rural communities. 335 survey responses were received and one organisational response.

This report:

- 1) Outlines the approach and consultation methods deployed;
- 2) Provides an analysis of key results and findings.

### **1) OUTLINE OF APPROACH AND CONSULTATION METHODS**

A mixed-methods approach was employed to ascertain the views of residents, businesses, third sector groups, community organisations, stakeholders and any other sectors interested in supporting the development of our rural communities. Both qualitative and quantitative questions were designed to collect views on the issues affecting rural communities in Carmarthenshire. Specifically, the consultation focused on collecting opinions on the matters which are important to secure the future prosperity of our rural communities.

#### **Publicity**

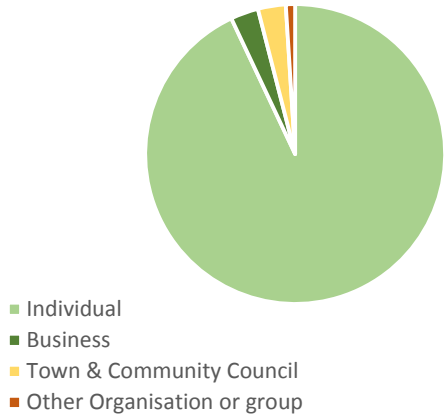
The consultation was publicised through the Council's press office, through means including: press releases; article in Carmarthenshire News; information on the Council's website; online consultation portal (hosted on iLocal) and through social media feeds. Members of the Task Group also attended the Royal Welsh Winter Fair on the 27 and 28 November 2018 to launch the consultation and to speak directly with stakeholders. Partners such as the Young Farmers, NFU, FUW and town and community councils were asked to share information about the survey with their membership.

#### **Survey**

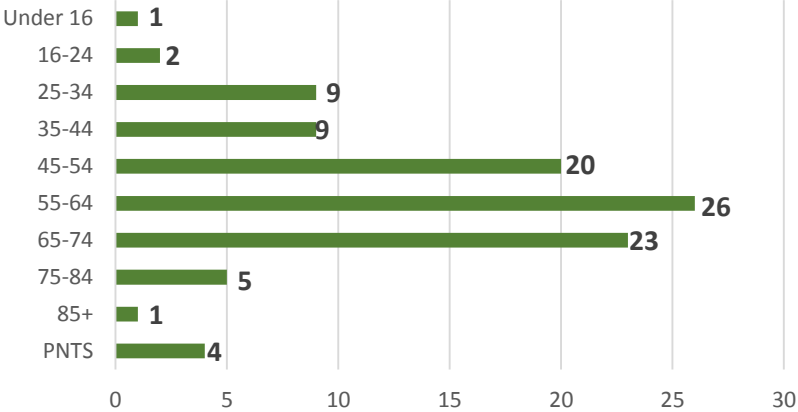
The survey contained a number of fixed-response (closed) and free-response (open) questions. Furthermore, the survey was designed to collect both qualitative and quantitative questioning for data analysis purposes.

The consultation exercise resulted in 335 responses which was collected through paper surveys, electronically and through tablet submissions. Demographic information is presented below.

Are you responding as an...



What is your age group? (%)



Demographic Characteristic	Overall %
Male	35.1%
Female	61.1%
PNTS	3.8%
<b>Relationship status</b>	
Single	11.4%
Married	65.2%
Separated	1.4%
Divorced	3.4%
Widowed	5.5%
Civil partnership	1%
Co-habiting	7.2%
Other	3.8%
PNTS	3.8%
<b>Sexual orientation</b>	
Straight	86%
LGB	4%
PNTS	10%
<b>Religion</b>	
Yes	47%
PNTS	15%
<b>Caring responsibilities</b>	

Demographic Characteristic	Overall %
<b>Ethnicity</b>	
White	95.8%
BME	0.7%
Other	0%
PNTS	3.5%
<b>Disability</b>	
Yes	12%
No	84%
PNTS	4%
<b>Preferred language</b>	
Welsh	35%
English	64%
Other	1%
<b>Is your gender the same now as when assigned at birth</b>	
Yes	95.4%
No	0.4%
PNTS	4.2%

Demographic Characteristic	Overall %
Male	35.1%
Yes	13%
PNTS	5%

Demographic Characteristic	Overall %
<b>Ethnicity</b>	

## 2) ANALYSIS OF KEY RESULTS AND FINDINGS

The following section of the report includes the quantitative results of the survey. Each question posed in the survey have been individually analysed and presented below.

### Question 1

#### **Tell us what you think are the main challenges facing rural communities?**

Respondents were asked to tick what they believed to be the main challenges facing the rural community and were able to select more than one option. Following this, they were asked to provide an explanation as to why they felt the issue ticked is a key challenge (this can be seen in the qualitative analysis summary following each question).

The table below presents the main challenges selected by respondents in order.

<b>Tell us what you think are the main challenges facing rural communities.</b>	
<b>Total number of respondents</b>	<b>333</b>
Employment Opportunities	213 64%
Broadband	201 60%
Public Services e.g. health & social care, leisure, libraries	154 46%
Transport	154 46%
Future of Agriculture	145 44%
Community Life	113 34%
Highways	106 32%
Land Use and Planning	108 32%
Housing	100

	30%
Economic Development	89 27%
Education	82 25%
Food production and processing	48 14%
Other	28 8%

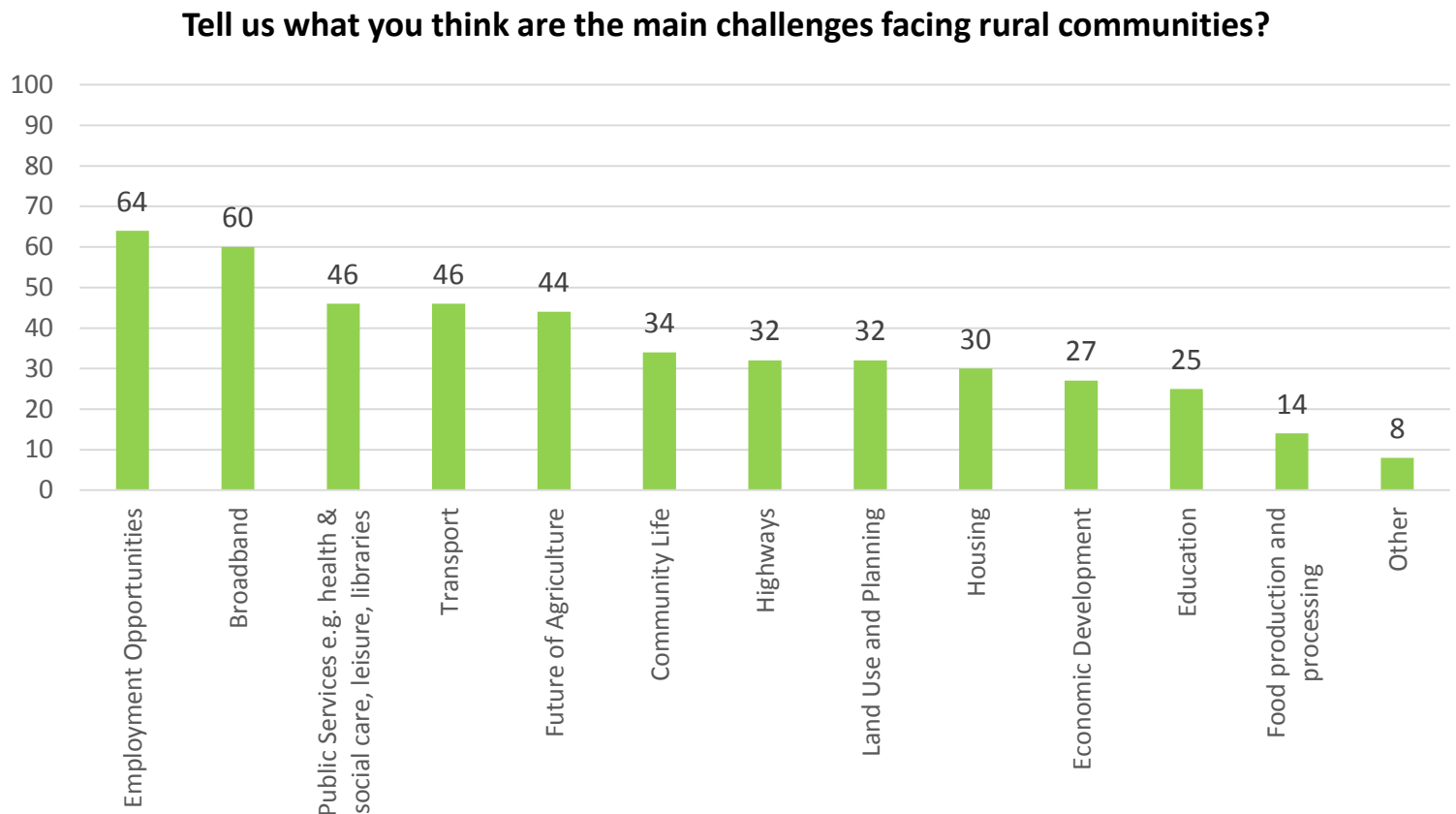
The table on the preceding page indicates that respondents believe that Employment Opportunities is the main challenge facing rural communities with 64% (n=213). This is closely followed by Broadband which 6 in 10 (60%; n=201) of respondents noted as one key issue facing rural communities.

Public Services such as health and social care, leisure and libraries; Transport and the Future of Agriculture also received a high percentage of votes with all of these key issues scoring above 40% (46%; 46%; 44%, respectively).

As pictured on the previous page, many issues such as; Community life (34%), Highways (32%), Land use and planning (32%) and Housing (30%) received a considerable amount of votes with approximately a third of respondents selecting these issues as a main challenge.

When considering the lower end of the table, Economic development (27%) and Education (25%) still received a high number of selections with approximately every 1 in 4 respondent noting as a main challenge facing the rural community. The challenge which received the fewest number of responses was Food production and processing (14%).

Presented below is a bar graph which illustrates the above findings.



The following section of the report contains the analysis of comments made in question 1. The analysis has been conducted on all 13 options as many of the comments noted the interrelated nature of options. Furthermore the analysis was conducted in this way to avoid repetition of findings.

### **Question 1 - Tell us what you think are the main challenges facing rural communities?**

#### **Qualitative analysis**

Firstly, many respondents noted that there were many challenges facing rural communities which all interact with each other. One consequence of the challenges noted by residents is that young people are being driven away from rural communities because there is lack of opportunities for work and often, the available work is poorly paid. Furthermore, currently there are not enough basic services and facilities easily accessible to keep young people in the areas. Several residents also noted that due to the lack of affordable homes, this increased the likelihood that young adults would not stay in rural areas.

Several comments were made on the lack of quality broadband in the rural area and its wider impact on the community. As previously mentioned, respondents noted that this has a severe impact on trying to keep young people in the rural community. Many respondents also noted that the lack of broadband facilities creates problems for local businesses, those who are self-employed and has also created problems for businesses wanting to invest in rural areas. Other factors were also attributed to the lack of broadband facilities such as the future of agriculture, food production and processing, with many individuals noting that if broadband facilities were improved this would have a significant impact.

One other factor which was frequently mentioned in the comment section was the lack of transport links in rural communities, with many individuals noting how challenging it was. Several reported that the bus services are limited and do not provide any late service and do not run every day which causes a significant impact on the residents’ ability to seek employment. Some other respondents commented on the impact that the lack of public transport has on residents and has increased the likelihood of isolation and loneliness in rural areas. It was also frequently mentioned that there is a need to improve the highways infrastructure in rural communities as it poses a challenge to the future of agriculture and sustaining the economic development of rural communities.

Finally, several respondents commented on the lack of public services available in the rural area noting that this causes a significant challenge. It was often reported that these services are a long distance away with insufficient public transport available. Comments were made on the ‘worry’ and apprehension of these services being a long distance to travel with an ever-increasing elderly population. Furthermore, some respondents noted that the lack of local public services decreased the opportunity to socialise which increased the likelihood of residents becoming isolated and lonely.

**Question 2**

**Tell us what you would like to improve about your rural community?**

The table below presents what areas respondents would like to improve about their rural community and are presented in order of most often selected.

<b>Tell us what you would like to improve about your rural communities?</b>	
<b>Total number of respondents</b>	<b>311</b>
Broadband	177 57%
Employment Opportunities	160 51%
Public Services e.g. health & social care, leisure, libraries	122 39%
Transport	115 37%
Future of Agriculture	107 34%

Highways	93 30%
Land Use and Planning	84 27%
Community Life	84 27%
Education	75 24%
Housing	72 23%
Economic Development	68 22%
Food production and processing	36 12%
Other	30 10%

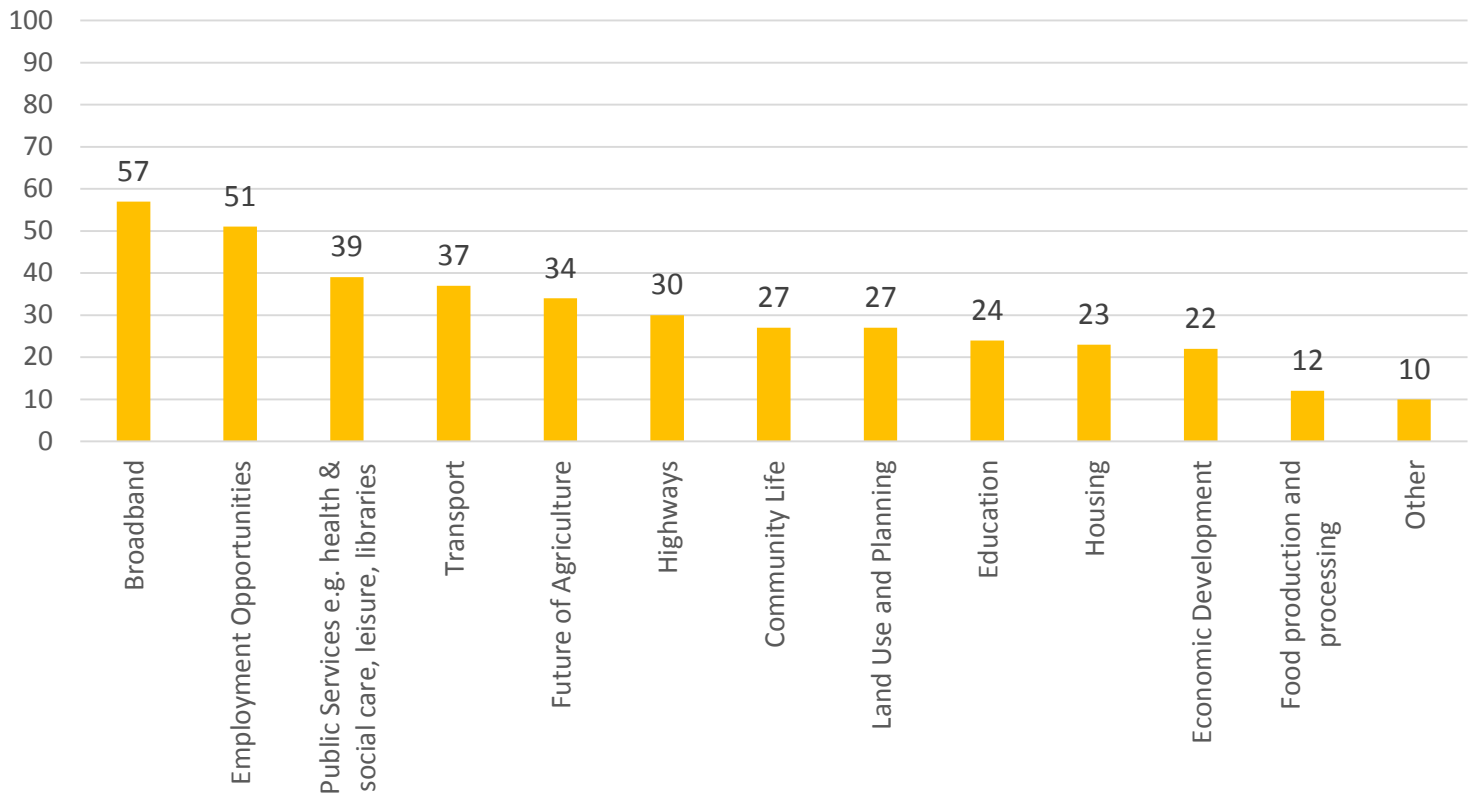
As seen in the table above, the two areas which received the highest number of responses were Broadband (57%) and Employment Opportunities (51%). Interestingly, these two topics were also the most popular amongst respondents when noting the main challenges facing the rural community in question 1.

Many other subjects received a considerable number of responses such as: Public services (e.g. health & social care, leisure, libraries; 39%), Transport (37%), Future of agriculture (34%) and Highways (30%). Moreover, topics such as: Land Use and Planning (27%), Community Life (27%), Education (24%), Housing (23%) and Economic Development (22%) were selected approximately by 1 in every 4 respondent. Food Production and processing received the fewest replies with only 12% of respondents selecting this option.

Pictured below is a bar graph containing the information above.



## Tell us what you would like to improve about your rural communities?



### **Question 2 - Tell us what you would like to improve about your rural community?**

#### **Qualitative analysis**

Many respondents stated that the challenges facing rural communities are dependent on each other i.e. Broadband / employment/ transport / health. Insufficient broadband service is having a significant impact on rural communities affecting employment opportunities and businesses being able to run efficiently and a barrier for young people wishing to move back to their communities to start a business. It was noted that it is essential that Welsh Government increase funding for rural communities in order to develop and install adequate broadband services. Respondents also felt that BT/Openreach should be forced to provide an immediate and honest installation date for providing Fibre to the premises (FTTP) in the county. Young professionals that grow up in rural Carmarthenshire find themselves having to move away in order to secure suitable employment. Many also noted that adequate broadband could enable more people to work from home and allow them to care for relatives or children whilst doing so, increasing well-being and reducing the burden and

demand on care services for the elderly. Many respondents noted that employment opportunities would improve if adequate broadband was available throughout the county.

Several respondents expressed their concerns in respect of an uncertain future for the farming industry and suggested that opportunities/incentives to sustain the industry would encourage the younger generation to be more involved in it. It was also noted that adequate broadband was vital for sustaining agriculture and any other rural businesses. Some suggested that farm businesses should be encouraged to grow trees as a future long term investment portfolio which would create employment and complement the annual cycle of agriculture.

Many commented that some rights of ways/footpaths are impassable and unusable for residents or tourists, if these were improved it would increase tourism and help the local economy and create employment. Economic development is required to raise funds to maintain highways and provide public services.

There were many comments regarding the planning policy, it was felt that this needed to be altered in order to assist suitable development and economic regeneration in rural areas instead of being a barrier.

Many comments received emphasised the importance of maintaining public health services. Several respondents stated that in rural communities, people have to travel long distances to access health facilities, which creates stress due to insufficient transport access. It was felt that it is difficult to attend health appointments unless you have access to your own transport, many of the public transport routes are usually on main roads and far away from rural properties. Respondents felt that more support is needed for local groups that support social care and health and an improved system for GP appointments.

A number of respondents felt that social care and health facilities such as libraries and leisure centres are vital. Some stated that loneliness is a major problem for people of all ages and can affect health and well-being. A local community initiative encouraging cross-generational social interaction would be valuable and relatively inexpensive to deliver. It is difficult to develop a community where there are no resources to link with. Many elderly feel excluded from communities due to lack of transport, public toilets, seating areas and central community venues to meet i.e. cafes, libraries. It was suggested that Day Centres should be available for holding social gatherings in the community for residents in similar situations to meet up.

Respondents also noted that the closure of schools, post offices and banks in rural areas had a negative impact on communities. Furthermore, many expressed that it is difficult to attract medical professionals to small rural areas.

Many stated that public transport is not suitable for commuters, forcing people to use their own vehicles. Moreover, respondents noted that the rail infrastructure is not viable due to the speed and timetable of the services.

Another suggestion was to create networks of Community and Town Councils, as well as other stakeholders, facilitated by the County Council in order to work together on providing solutions to some of the issues raised from this survey. Specifically, these networks should be composed of individuals and groups who may have expertise or skills that are otherwise going to waste, as well as ideas and motivation to make things happen.

**Question 3**

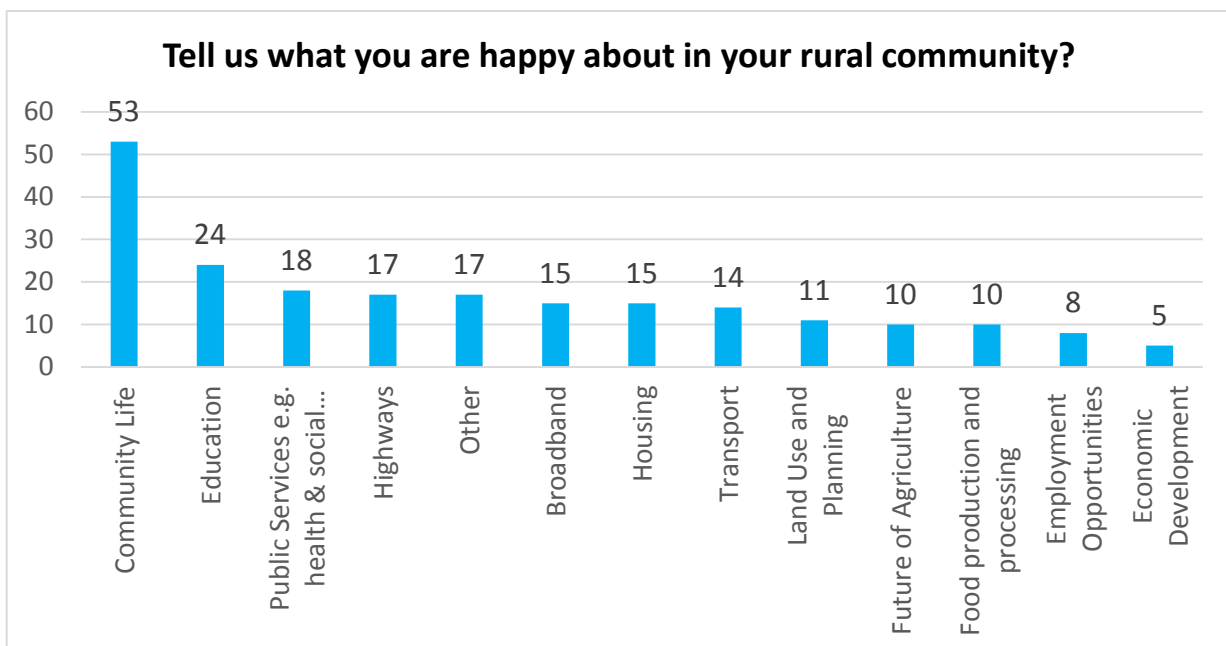
**Tell us what you are happy about in your rural community?**

The table below presents what respondents noted they are happy about in their rural community in order of most often selected to the least often selected.

<b>Tell us what you are happy about in your rural community?</b>	
<b>Total number of respondents</b>	<b>264</b>
Community Life	141 53%
Education	63 24%
Public Services e.g. health & social care, leisure, libraries	48 18%
Other	45 17%
Highways	46 17%
Housing	39 15%
Broadband	39 15%
Transport	38 14%
Land Use and Planning	28 11%
Future of Agriculture	27 10%
Food production and processing	25 10%
Employment Opportunities	20 8%
Economic Development	12 5%

As seen in the table above, over half of the respondents (53%) noted that they are happy with the community life in the rural community. In comparison to others, this option was selected considerably more times than any other. The second highest option which

respondents noted that they were happy with in the rural community was education which approximately 1 in every 4 respondent selected (24%). 18% of respondents noted that they were happy with the Public services (e.g. health & social care, leisure, libraries) in the rural community. Some respondents noted ‘Other’ aspects they are happy with in the rural area, however, under closer inspection many of these ‘other’ features were similar to the options provided. 17% of respondents noted they were happy with highways in the rural community whilst Housing (15%), Broadband (15%), Transport (14%), Land Use and Planning (11%), Future of Agriculture (10%) and Food production and processing (10%) all received 15%-10% of individual selections. The two options which received the fewest number of responses were Employment Opportunities (8%) and Economic Development (5%) where under 10% of respondents noted that they were happy with these aspects.



### **Question 3: - Tell us what you are happy about in your rural community?**

#### **Qualitative analysis**

Firstly, when examining the free-text responses for the above question, the majority of respondents made reference to the ‘community feel’ and ‘community spirit’ of rural areas. Respondents noted that rural areas have a great sense of community and most individuals are willing to help each other. Some noted that the community life is created by those who are passionate about keeping the rural community thriving and vibrant. Furthermore, some noted that these individuals work tirelessly to help others in their community to keep it alive.

Another common response received regarding what makes residence ‘happy’ in their community was the beauty of the country side. Several responses noted that they ‘loved’ the ‘peace and quiet’ of rural areas. Furthermore, some comments related to the ‘open green spaces’ and ‘fresh air’ as main sources of happiness living in the rural community.

Several respondents noted that the schools in the rural community were ‘very good’ providing excellent education to young children. Other responses were made regarding the transport links and roads of rural areas, stating that they were very good in comparison to other rural areas in other counties. Although highlighted as a source of happiness in rural community, many comments indicated that although satisfied with the transport and roads, many suggested that this is not the same for all rural communities and some roads require additional maintenance.

**Question 4**

**What three things would make the biggest difference to you living and/or working in a rural community?’**

The following section of the report displays the analysis for the above question. The results can be seen in the table below.

<b>Overall Total</b>		
<b>Topic</b>	<b>No. Comments</b>	<b>%</b>
Highways	146	14.4
Broadband	134	13.2
Transport	116	11.4
Other	115	11.3
Public Services	88	8.7
Community Life	86	8.5
Employment Opportunities	78	7.7
Economic Development	54	5.3
Land Use & Planning	52	5.1
Future of Agriculture	52	5.1
Housing	50	4.9
Education	40	3.9
Food Production & Processing	4	0.4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1015</b>	<b>100</b>

As can be seen from the table, Highways received the highest number of selections with 14.4% of respondents noting this would make the biggest difference in a rural community. This was closely followed by broadband (13.2%) and transport (11.4%). Furthermore, respondents noted that there were ‘other’ areas which, if improved, would make the biggest difference in the rural community. Other topics included:

- Investment in sustainable energy
- Pro-active elected members
- Ensure the Welsh language is kept and enforce incomers to learn the language

- Banks and post offices in rural communities
- Improved recycling - glass collection from houses
- Parking charges
- More bins
- Less council tax as less services are available
- Better relationship with local authority
- A way to keep the young within the county
- More support with childcare for women returning to work

e. Carmarthenshire Rural Affairs Conference Report – 7 September 2018

## Carmarthenshire Rural Affairs

Conference Report

7 September 2018

# Carmarthenshire Rural Affairs Conference Report

## Introduction and Background

The Carmarthenshire County Council Rural Affairs Task Group was established in September 2017 with a view to consider the issues affecting rural communities in Carmarthenshire and to identify actions the Council, in partnership with other public bodies and organisations, can take in addressing those issues to ensure and support rural regeneration in future years. The Group are aiming to prepare a report with recommendations for action by March/April 2019.

The Group has been engaging and consulting with a range of partners and stakeholders in order to fully consider the issues facing rural communities and the Conference on the 7 September 2018 was an opportunity for many of those stakeholders to share their views and experiences in order to inform the final report and recommendations. It was also an opportunity to hear from academics and experienced community and business leaders on their understanding and approach.

Over 160 people attended the Conference held at the Halliwell Conference Centre, University of Wales Trinity Saint David, Carmarthen.

The event was ably facilitated by Aled Rhys Jones.

The following provides a summary of the key points raised by the individual speakers and from the discussion groups held during the Conference. All of the points raised will be considered by the



Carmarthenshire Rural Affairs Task Group as they prepare their final report and recommendations by March/April 2019.

### **Cllr. Cefin Campbell, Executive Board Member for Communities and Rural Affairs and Chairman of the Rural Affairs Task Group**

As Chairman of the Rural Affairs Task Group, Cllr. Campbell outlined some of the key issues identified by the Task Group to date. It was noted that we face a period of uncertainty but we need to respond positively for the sake of our rural communities. The Carmarthenshire Rural Affairs Task Group has undertaken wide engagement and consultation with a range of stakeholders to date and a number of key issues have already been raised.

It was noted that 60% of Carmarthenshire residents live in rural area, that is approximately 120,000 people. Our rural communities are very different in nature and have varied needs. The same solution will not work across all rural communities so we have to consider specific requirements.

Cllr. Campbell noted a few of the key issues facing our rural communities:

- De-population of your young people is a big issue. We lose an estimated 1,000 young people from Carmarthenshire each year, many of those would be from rural areas. Approximately 60% of these are Welsh speakers;
- We have an ageing population. There is a smaller percentage of people between the ages of 20-39 living in rural areas. This means that we are losing future leaders as young people leave;
- With an ageing population we have additional needs on public services;
- GDP levels in rural areas are 70% lower than the UK average. Income levels are also lower. 87% of rural businesses in Carmarthenshire employ less than 9 people which indicates that

we have a shortage of medium sized businesses in our rural communities;

- We recognise that there is a shortage of affordable homes meaning that young people and young families cannot buy homes in rural Carmarthenshire. We aren't unique in this sense as this seems to be an issue in rural areas across the whole of the UK;
- Business development depends on fast broadband access and provision is currently patchy in our rural areas;
- Banks, shops and pubs closing. Unfortunately this is a common picture across rural areas and is a particular problem for our once thriving market towns;
- We have some environmental issues which need to be fully considered. River pollution is an area that needs to be addressed;
- All of the above factors have contributed to the reduction in the number of Welsh speakers in Carmarthenshire.

The Task Group has undertaken a public consultation with a total of 335 responses being received. Key headlines from the feedback indicate priority for the following areas:

- more jobs;
- improve broadband;
- improve public services;
- improve public transport;
- support for the agricultural sector,

The Task Group has also identified a need to consider some issues further including enabling more local food processing in Carmarthenshire or South West Wales which will add value to the concept of the Carmarthenshire pound. Other areas that the Task

Group are due to consider include transport, tourism, leisure and services including education, health and social care, childcare.

Brexit is of course a key issues for our rural communities. This could be the single most damaging event facing the agricultural sector since the Second World War. At this point we are still no closer to knowing what kind of deal we will strike. If we crash out of the EU with no deal or a bad deal the repercussions for rural communities will be disastrous. Cllr Campbell outlined some key statistics:

- 90% of Wales' food and drink exports are to the EU;
- 30% Wales' red meat is exported, 95% of that to EU;
- £600m per year is received in Wales through direct payments from EU, 50% of that from the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP);
- Change in procurement arrangements may be a positive as this could enable a change to be able to support local procurement.

So, what is the Council already doing:

- Swansea Bay City Deal will see a total investment worth £1.3 billion across the region. This will create an additional 12,000 jobs over next 15 years. Many of the projects will benefit rural communities as well as the more urban areas of the region;
- The development of the Tywi Valley cycle path which will see an investment worth £8m which will boost the tourism offer of the area;
- A Carmarthenshire Rural Enterprise Fund worth £2m has been established to support businesses;
- There will be a focus on supporting our market towns over the next 3 years – 10 towns will be support starting with Llandovery, St Clears and Whitland;
- A new mobile library service has been launched;

- A new housing company has been established which will enable us to build or buy housing to tackle the affordable housing issue in the county. It is planned to provide 1,000 more affordable homes over next 3 years, with 50% of these having already been achieved;
- Council farms are to be kept in Council ownership;
- New Local Development Plan will look to support development in rural areas;
- Tourism strategy to be develop.

In closing, Cllr Campbell noted that although there are black clouds on the horizon we all have a responsibility to make sure what we have inherited from our forefathers is able to thrive for the future. We cannot be overcome by the circumstances but we must find opportunities, be inspired and work together to secure and further build on the foundations of our rich and diverse county for future generations.

**Prof. Janet Dwyer, Professor of Rural Policy and Director of the Countryside and Community Research Institute at the University of Gloucestershire**

Prof. Dwyer outlined the key findings of a study she had prepared on behalf of the Wales Centre for Public Policy in January 2018 '*The Implications of Brexit for Agriculture, Rural Areas and Land Use in Wales*'.

She stated at the outset of her presentation that the current uncertainty around the final Brexit deal arrangements is making it very challenging, if not impossible to plan appropriately or make any decisions in terms of future policy and approach.

In general, rural Wales has strong and weak points in terms of its economic and social position. The key sectors for rural areas are going to be: public sector; tourism; SME manufacturing and crafts; and food businesses. Studies suggest that approximately 60% of registered businesses in remote rural market towns were associated with farming. There is also evidence that a lack of medium-sized firms in rural areas is linked to poor infrastructure and services.

Unemployment in rural areas is low but average income is also lower meaning that rural poverty is an issue particularly for remote elderly households.

A high-quality rural environment is recovering slowly from past pressures, but is very vulnerable to change. 30% of Welsh rural areas are designated protected area which could be a benefit from a tourism perspective. Wales is a major source of drinking water to Wales and England. Ecosystem services depend upon sensitive land management however, flood mitigation and management is an increasing issue of concern. On-going changes in climate are indicating that Wales will be wetter.

Carmarthenshire has a balance of farm types within the county with the main sector being dairy but with a good balance of sheep, beef, general cropping, pigs, poultry and horticulture. This diversity could be a benefit to the agricultural sector in Carmarthenshire compared to other areas which are more dependent on certain types of farms. Business adaptation and survival going forward will be dependent on this diversity.

Grazing livestock farms depend upon both CAP pillar 1 and pillar 2 aid and any changes to the funding arrangements will have significant social, welfare and health concerns among farm families, particularly in Carmarthenshire, Powys and Gwynedd.

In terms of major products, trading patterns and trends sheep meat dominates Wales' production with most being exported to the EU. More beef and dairy are consumed within the UK, however there are key imports in these sectors from Ireland. Horticulture and poultry are small but there is growth potential in these sectors however this will depend upon input / energy price trends. Tourism and leisure is an important income for some with off-farm income helping more than 40% of farm households. Forestry also shows potential for further development, especially if fuel prices rise.

Some of the key points currently shaping Brexit impacts include:

1. Future trading conditions: Tariffs between UK and EU could be 0% - 40%, even 60%; could vary by product. Lower tariff barriers with third countries could also be a possibility for not likely for 10 years
2. Future public funding to farms and rural areas: will these be the same, lower or higher? UK and Wales Governments have already signalled new priorities and goals. If subsidy is to continue and the Barnett formula is used to allocate funding to Wales it will immediately mean 50% less to Wales than is currently received through CAP funding.
3. Regulatory regime & wider economy conditions: strong or weak? Currency exchange rate?

Some common themes are now starting to emerge which we need to further consider as post-Brexit arrangements become clearer:

- Likely decline in sheep production after short-term 'heyday', need to restructure and re-orientate these businesses;
- Scope for modest growth in beef and dairy sectors before new trade deals;

- Food chain response will be key: loyalty and willingness to invest in Wales and Welsh products, longer-term pricing and market growth, larger operators will anticipate and respond quickly to change;
- Public sector pressures may lead to an increased gap between demand and supply in rural services, especially for health & social care
- Whilst hardly visible in statistics, farming downturn threatens:
  - Community viability in remote areas;
  - Land-use and ecosystem services: less grazing on hills, more intensive poultry or dairy in some areas – natural capital and tourism impacts?
- Opportunities for new land uses: forestry, horticulture, vines, energy and leisure, housing?

In closing, Prof. Dwyer noted two key priorities for rural communities going forward.

The first of those is **adaptation**. There is a need to prepare Welsh farms, upland management and rural businesses for big changes.

- There will need to be a focus on up-skilling and developing capacity for group action and innovation, learning and exchanging ideas.
- There will need to be help for the older generation and struggling businesses to exit with dignity.
- There is a need to develop farm and community-level coping strategies.
- Promote mid-scale food/rural industry infrastructure
- Environment-proof these changes (e.g. no sudden cuts, balanced planning controls)
- Increase agri-food sector and community resilience via new long-term partnerships.
- More partnership working between government and industry, government and communities, and key sectors of the rural economy including financial providers.

The second priority should focus on developing a **new support framework**.

- There will need to be a bespoke approach to public support, to maintain and enhance natural resources, cultural heritage and rural vitality across Wales, to benefit current and future generations.
- A long-term food, natural resources and viable landscapes scheme for Wales, with clear, agreed national targets.
- A flexible, locally-tailored approach, developed with farmers, foresters, communities and other stakeholders, giving space for private funding as well as public, supporting economic, social/cultural and environmental outcomes together.

- This approach will need trusted delivery agents who can deliver a smooth phase-in with intelligent monitoring and control and a fair UK budget share.

The connections between people, environment and culture will be vital for the future of our rural communities and ensuring a partnership approach across sectors will be to the benefit of all parties going forward.

## Gerallt Llewelyn Jones, former director of Menter Môn

In his role as the director of Menter Môn Gerallt Llewelyn Jones he led the enterprise agency to become a diverse development deliverer and social enterprise business. The agency seeks to develop the economy from within, with an emphasis on adding value to natural and human resources. He shared with Conference his experiences in taking the agency forward and provided suggestions for rural regeneration in the future.

The key drivers for Menter Môn's work include an emphasis on the rural economy via:

- business and agriculture;
- new product development;
- support for communities of interest; and
- focusing on practical solutions.

The agency also work to three underlying principles

1. **Innovation:**

What makes us different makes us interesting. What makes us interesting makes us marketable. The most successful rural areas in Europe are those which add value to and harness these unique resource differentiators to develop their economies, thereby ascending the global ladder (Yves Champetier, 1990)

2. **Agitation:** engage, gather, challenge and agitate to seek innovations and solutions.

3. **Pragmatism:** this has to be befriended and respected.

The only way to respond to the challenges facing rural communities is to work together in partnership. No one group or organisations will be able to respond to the challenges alone therefore there is a need to agitating the communities of interest within Carmarthenshire. There is a need to interrogate tolerances and drive common ground between groups and organisations into objectives and projects. This is what is known as pragmatic agitation.

We must be consistently creative and develop ways to add value to what we have to offer and what makes us different. We must also take responsibility for finding our own solutions. There is no point waiting for answers from the outside, we must develop and do what works for our communities.

Gerallt Llewelyn Jones referred to the symptoms of decline and used a medical metaphor to challenge the way we respond to community development. When thinking about symptoms,

prognosis, cure, we have unreasonable expectations of external saviours, of government, of inward investors which does not allow us to think beyond our analysis of the symptoms. However, government and inward investment alone cannot revitalise rural economies. The patient has to think beyond symptoms and a bad prognosis. So what do we need to do?

- Identify a **leadership** group to lead a change in communities from passive to proactive.
- Community based **education**: Individual Enterprise / Social Enterprise / Growing Food / Renewable Energy.
- Strengthening **community identity and belonging** is critical. Chapels and schools and pubs no longer do it – new collective activities will.
- Examine and embrace **new structures for change** – Community Land Trusts, Housing Trusts, Asset transfer of empty schools, Council owned land.
- Community based **skills audits**: challenge inhabitants - what can you contribute?
- Re-establish **food diversity** through collective community action – reconnect people to land, to growing and adding value.
- Establish **Enterprise Clubs and Fabrication Laboratories** - individuals making things, innovating, provide the early resources.
- Huge change lies ahead in **distributed energy** provision – rural communities can become self-sufficient in energy. Audit renewable models for your community and pursue smart energy grids.
- **Local Investment Funds** can work in some areas (Be Nesa Llyn) and provide for local determination.
- Get **Digital** or Die.

Some key growth areas were also identified:

- Renewable energy;
- Energy storage;
- Digital infrastructure;
- Digital services;
- Fabrication technology; and
- Food production.

Gerallt Llewellyn Jones went on to outline some possible curative approaches:

- Local Investment Funds;
- Credit Unions;
- Digital technology academies;



- Fabrication technology academies;
- Food production academies; and
- Distributed generation of energy; energy storage;

There is also a need to secure streams of new food, craft, tourism and environmental products.

Is it also essential to nurture new generations of creative people in our rural areas, if we stop imagining, stop envisioning, stop aspiring, we will decline.

## Panel Discussion

Clr Cefin Campbell; Prof. Janet Dywer; Gerallt Llewelyn Jones; and Simon Wright

Question and answer session.

## Discussion Groups

### **Entrepreneurship: session facilitated by David Hieatt, Huit Denim**

#### Feedback points

1. Confidence
2. Hunger
3. Why are we afraid to fail?
4. Be ambitious for talent
5. Don't be frightened of young people moving away – bringing the treasure back

#### Scribe notes from discussion

- Why does Wales lack confidence?
- Some people have the hunger but don't know how to harness it – need help from others to bring it out?
- Why are we afraid to fail? We've got to get over ourselves
- Need to be ambitious and nurture/develop talent. Why do we think other people are better than us?
- Need to accept that young people will move away for education, jobs and other reasons but the key for us is to make sure that they want to come back – they can then make a significant contribution to their communities

- Bring the treasure back

## Agriculture: session facilitated by Euryrn Jones, HSBC

### Feedback points

1. Why don't milk processors invest in Carmarthenshire?
2. Capture the enthusiasm of the young people whilst lack of vision of the older generation
3. Potential of micro milk processing as the beer industry
4. Adapt planning policies to enable farmers to change
5. Adapt policies to ensure the possibility of local procurement

### Scribe notes from discussion

- Attitudes of farmers in terms of looking for customers
- No control on the market, market volatility
- Need a two way conversation with the buyer
- Lack of local milk processors. Why don't milk processors invest in Carmarthenshire?
- Opinions of both generations differ
- Banks investment – do they support everybody?
- Potato industry in Pembroekshire – contracts created. (These are different to the MMB – farmers don't have to be part of the contract)
- County Council needs to speak to processors
- Co-operative works well in North Wales.
- Micro-production in Cross Hands (these produce Menyn Sir Gâr)
- Beer brewing industry has changed with a number of small producers now in place. Can we replicate this for the milk industry?
- How do we get young people into agriculture?
- 'Get into milking' project with Coleg Sir Gâr in Gelli Aur. Similar scheme to 'Back to work' which targets young, unemployed, refugees, people released from prison etc.
- Farmers need to produce more diverse crops for human consumption
- Geography has an effect on contracts for Farmers
- Procurement rules – Ask / demand Local Authority to buy from Local Farmers
- Powys Pound – keeping the money local. Procure local produce but this has meant higher costs.
- Local Authority to explore giving preference, following leaving the European Union, to producers who adhere to the same Terms & Conditions, as when in the EU.
- New Entrants - cost of farms and land too expensive

- Joint Ventures and contractual agreements are options that need to be explored and encouraged
- Focus groups for young people and current landowners
- Current criteria and mechanisms for classing young entrants was discussed.
- Local Authority can influence through Planning. Cost of plots / houses too expensive in rural communities for young people.
- Local Authority will need to adapt planning policies to support change.
- Hill farmers rely completely on subsidies
- Taking away grants and subsidies will be to the detriment of the hills and mountains as farmers and animals are keeping the walking routes clear and suitable for walkers.

## **Infrastructure & Services: session facilitated by Llinos Quelch, Carmarthenshire County Council**

### Feedback points

1. Broadband
2. Co-location of services at community hubs and businesses – market towns
3. Organise services jointly – health and social care
4. Improve links between education and employment – skills gap
5. Regulated car sharing scheme

### Scribe notes from discussion

- Public transport issues – community solutions? Further develop Bwca Bus model? Car share clubs? Organised hitch-hiking – example from France
- Lack of accommodation
- Opportunities to develop community hubs – real or virtual? One location for a number of services.
- Co-ordination of organisations to support small businesses
- Role of planning and development
- Education and schools – impact on communities
- Roads and highways – condition
- Energy – traditional and renewable solutions
- Social services – able to cope with future demand? Need integrated approach with health

- Access to broadband and mobile phone networks essential: home working and businesses. Possible community led solutions – dig the trenches.
- Universal service obligation for phones but not for broadband?
- Affordable homes: keep young people locally. Need to hold developers to account
- Spatial context – how will PSB get well paid jobs north of the Tywi? Sustainable rural economies. Need well distributed jobs and services, not just the M4 corridor. We need different models for different areas – tailor the service according to local need. Centralisation of services and jobs is challenging
- Work and employment: look at procurement opportunities to support local businesses
- Market towns: role in social and communication. Use sense of place that belongs to market towns and re-energise through local services. Need to understand the role different towns and villages can play in rural regenerations
- Community asset transfer: third sector, partnership working but also bring the private sector on board
- Financial services: need to keep banks (or bring them back) to market towns. Can a Council provide banking facilities? Establish Banc Cymru
- Use redundant rail corridors to establish networks
- Business units to be developed in market towns and villages
- Change planning policy in order to facilitate employment and diversification opportunities on farms and rural businesses
- Role of Town and Community Councils
- Shortage of Doctors: role for education department to co-ordinate careers advice and opportunities for young people
- Prepare a Welcome to Carmarthenshire pack.

# Environment & Well-being: session facilitated by Ioan Williams, Natural Resources Wales

## Feedback points

1. Financial challenges / pressures across all sectors – we need to use our resources wisely
2. The importance of education (formal, community based and informal). The potential that the new curriculum holds in creating a local curriculum
3. Community Asset Transfer – how do we encourage people to take part and specifically young people
4. Green prescribing and Prudent Health – how do we link these opportunities?
5. The importance of linking accessibility and promotion / marketing

## Scribe notes from discussion

- More pressure on Farmers financial – when conditions are better, Farmers can place more emphasis on the environment
- Estimated value of tourism – how do we know the economic benefit
- How do we communicate local challenges? How is aware of the main local issues?
- Need to raise awareness of the work of Natural Resources Wales (NRW) – and the support the organisation can offer?
- There has been a shift in responsibility – we depend on regulation such as through NRW
- The importance of education – an opportunity to promote well-being as part of the new curriculum. Schools will have an opportunity to create local curricula/projects that can promote creativity and raise awareness amongst pupils and teachers
- The Menter Cwm Gwendraeth project Tyfu Cynefin was highlighted – support for schools to arrange trips and raise awareness of well-being and the environment locally
- Need to ensure actions for environmental matters – also, with Brexit there will be less grants available. We need to make better use of resources across sectors
- It was suggested that public policies contradict each other – need to improve joint consideration of environmental, economic and cultural issues
- Agreement on the importance of the curriculum and that more time needs to be set aside for specific modules in terms of community and environmental matters – need to use local specialists to bring things together
- Suggestion of using concentric circles within communities and planning systems – community, area, market town, county town, county
- Excessive rainfall as an opportunity and challenge – why don't we utilise more hydropower
- Hydropower / microhydro schemes – need to look at low consequence schemes

- Need to bring back support for local micro initiatives, taking focus away from tariffs and financial benefit
- Concerns regarding intensification of the dairy industry and maize production – advice and support is needed from NRW – e.g. emerging technologies to under sow maize with grass
- Using volunteer base – how can we incentivise and support community interest companies
- Example cited from Tir Coed, working in Carmarthenshire from 2019 – supporting communities into public access and areas and supporting people back into work
- Are we looking at a damaged environment? We are not protecting our environment under current restrictions. However, there are third sector organisations who are willing to help the regulatory and statutory bodies
- Examples were cited from Scotland, whereby forests have been handed to the local community to nurture and development – also a project in Pontrhydfendigaid where a local forest area has been handed over to the community
- Potential with Community Asset Transfer – however, do we engage with our communities and specifically young people?
- Who's role is it to Lead and Agitate?
- Importance of public transport to education – new curriculum to incorporate outside space
- Adopt a riverbank scheme in Pembrokeshire cited as a good example – we need to look across primary and secondary sectors
- We need to look at public transport and the links to private sectors (financial support / sponsorship)
- Concern was noted regarding the digital age and encouraging interest in rural areas – how do we create that space?
- Links to education and setting homework – can we set tasks to take young people to our rural areas / what's local to them?
- Links to organisations who work with young people – we can't assume that young people know about open access. We need to be less risk averse – how can the Education department advise school teachers in order to encourage this?
- We need to strengthen links to mental health, mindfulness and well-being
- The Health Service can no longer meet demand – how do we link prudent health with our environment?
- An example was cited from Coventry where people with mental health issues are supported through a green prescribing network. This is also available in Pembrokeshire through WWAMH and PAVO

## Visitor Economy: session facilitated by Helen Howells, Hwylus

### Feedback points

1. Improve collaboration across the whole sector
2. Improve promotion of existing events
3. Work on getting passing trade to stay
4. Develop the open air offer
5. Developing the sense of place - what's unique to Carmarthenshire

### Scribe notes from discussion

- Need to improve co-ordination of effort across the sector – establish a forum to co-ordinate activity to promote the sector. Communities, businesses and local authority need to work together
- Look at specific campaigns across the County
- Need to look at models that have worked e.g. Myddfai; Menter Stiniog
- Use hubs in towns e.g. new centre in Llandeilo
- Co-ordinate resources and expertise – identify opportunities and promote
- Better promote and market what is already going on
- Collaboration with local businesses so that they can benefit from local events
- Understand what attracts people to the county and build on that
- Connect with mass participation events already taking place in the County e.g. triathlons and other sporting events, support event organisers to promote events to the wider community
- Need to develop a conferencing centre and hotel accommodations
- Develop camper van/caravan provision in the County
- Public transport systems to bring visitors to the towns – possible community project?
- Look at the Ayers concept in France
- Natural landscape: fishing/river; water; sea; cycling; walking; castles
- Improve the rivers to take advantage of fishing tourism
- Fishing at Llyn Brianne?
- Water sports opportunities at Llyn Brianne – long boat; canoe; sailing
- Improve understanding of river life in order to enhance use of the river and support the local economy
- Opportunity to develop street food pop ups
- Need to include local community history on the school curriculum – need everybody in the community to sell our county to visitors
- County of Inspiration; County of Stories
- 20 minutes from everywhere

- embedding a brand at a county level that is marketable on a national and global level. Tie in with Visit Wales campaigns
- Understand what makes Carmarthenshire unique and promote it: diversity of food products; design local menus based on these foods; promotion
- Use private media companies such as Tinopolis to make short films on menu options for either posting on the internet or TV. Use local chefs e.g. Simon Wright to promote. YouTube channel for Carmarthenshire Food Tourism
- Genus Loci approach in Italy – create a Spirit of Place
- What is Carmarthenshire?

## **Acknowledgements**

The Carmarthenshire County Council Rural Affairs Task Group would like to express their thanks to all of the speakers and facilitators who contributed to the Conference. The Task Group would also like to thank the main Conference sponsors: LHP Chartered Accountant; University of Wales Trinity Saint David; and Coleg Sir Gâr. Thanks are also due to Rees Richards (Chartered Surveyors, Land and Estate Agents); NFU; FUW; and Hwylus for their sponsorship of the discussion groups.



## EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

1<sup>ST</sup> JULY 2019

<b>RIOT COUNTY SKATE PARK</b>		
<b>Purpose:</b> To seek approval to commit funding towards the development of a skate park for the County.		
<b>Recommendations / key decisions required:</b> To endorse the recommendations of the report.		
<b>Reasons:</b> The Riot County Skate Park Committee is currently in the process of developing applications for funding for the development of a Skate Park. A commitment from the Authority would provide the leverage to secure funding from other sources.		
Relevant scrutiny committee to be consulted NO		
Exec Board Decision Required		YES
Council Decision Required		NO
<b>EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:-</b> Cllr. D. Jenkins		
Directorate: Chief Executives	Designations:	Tel / Email:
Name of Head of Service: Wendy Walters	Director of Regeneration & Policy	01267 224112 <a href="mailto:wswalters@carmarthenshire.gov.uk">wswalters@carmarthenshire.gov.uk</a>
Report Author: Helen Morgan	Economic Development Manager	01267 224902 <a href="mailto:hmorgan@carmarthenshire.gov.uk">hmorgan@carmarthenshire.gov.uk</a>

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**  
**EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING**  
**1<sup>ST</sup> JULY 2019**

**RIOT COUNTY SKATE PARK**

The purpose of this report is to seek approval to commit funding towards the development of the Riot Skate Park.

**Background:**

Llannon Community Council is currently developing a masterplan to redevelop and transform the Park. As part of the consultation process for the wider park development, there has been a strong need identified for the development of a Skate Park to provide opportunities for young people within the area.

The proposed Stake Park will be designed to a top specification, with ambitious plans to stage world class events. Skateboarding will be an Olympic Sport in 2020 which will further raise the profile of skateboarding as a sporting activity. The proposed facility will be designed to a specification that will support learners through to professionals and will be fully accessible for disabled skaters. The development will also include the installation of CCTV to ensure the safety of users.

The 'Riot' Skate Park Committee has been established to lead on the proposal and to oversee the management of the project from business planning through to the development of applications for funding. The Committee is made up from young people from the area.

The Riot Skate Park Committee is currently in the process of developing applications for funding for the development of the Skate Park. A commitment from the Authority would provide the leverage to secure funding from other sources.

**Benefits to the community:**

The Skate Park will provide a well needed facility for all ages, groups and abilities.

Riot Skate Park Committee are keen to promote the Skateboard culture in Carmarthenshire as a means of promoting well-being for young people in the area. Research demonstrates that Skate Parks lower crime and anti-social behaviour as well as having significant physical and mental health benefits.

There will be a significant amount of volunteering opportunities as a whole which will not only enhance skills and confidence but it will also give greater opportunities for the job market.

The Skate Park will have a positive economic impact on the area, drawing in visitors from across the County and beyond. The nearest outdoor skate park of similar specification is located 44 miles away in Haverfordwest therefore there will no displacement of activity. The Ramps facility in Llanelli is of a smaller scale and is predominantly indoor.

## **Costs and Funding Package:**

The indicative cost for the development of the Skate Park is £500,000. A detailed business plan, including designs and costings, is currently being developed for the project.

Match funding will be sought from Llannon Community Council as well as a range of funding programmes including National Lottery People and Places Programme. Any funding contribution from the Authority would be subject to review of the business plan as well as confirmation that the full funding package has been secured.

## **Project Governance**

The project will be managed by Llannon Community Council in partnership with the Riot Skate Park Committee. Llannon Community Council has strong governance, financial capability and has successfully managed grant funded projects. Llannon Community Council will act as the lead applicant in the submission of applications to funding bodies.

## **Land ownership**

The Authority has granted a long term lease to Llannon Community Council via a Community Asset Transfer for the land where the proposed Skate Park will be situated.

## **Community Consultation**

- A) Llannon Community Council commissioned Menter Cwm Gwendraeth to undertake a Parish Plan for Llannon Community Council. The Parish Plan particular emphasises the lack of sporting opportunities for people in the area.
- B) The Riot Skate Park Committee have been fully committed to this ambitious proposal and have led on several additional consultation and community engagement events:
- November 24th 2017 - a consultation evening for members of the community was held at the community hall to input into the design of the proposed skate park.
  - April 13th 2018 - Skaters from around Carmarthenshire attended County Hall to demonstrate their support for a new Skate Park development at the Park. More than 80 young people filled the Council Chamber
  - 25th July 2018 - local Carnival – awareness raising activities
  - August 15th 2018 - St. Catherine's Walk Carmarthen August 16th 2018 – design meeting with Freestyle Skate park designers
  - Social media e.g. 321 active members on Facebook
  - News Coverage – BBC and S4C

Further consultation will be undertaken as part of the business plan development e.g. County Scouts group etc

## Support

The wider Park Masterplan project has received support from the Community as described below:

- A high number of young people
- Upper Gwendraeth Valley Sports Club and Community Association
- Sports Development – positive discussions with Area Sports and Leisure Manager and Active Young People Officer have taken place
- Rugby and Football Clubs
- Family Centre
- Scout's Association
- Local retailers e.g. Andrew's Shop
- Great Mountain Club
- Care in the Community
- Old Age Group
- Doctor's Surgery

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?

NO

## IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report :

Signed: Chris Moore    Director of Corporate Services

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
<b>NONE</b>	<b>NONE</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NONE</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NONE</b>	<b>NONE</b>

### Finance

Grant funding will be provided upon confirmation of the Business Plan and the securing of the match funding for the project. Full project cost estimate is to be provided by Llannon Community Council.

Funding for the grant has been set-aside in earmarked reserves.

Grant commitment from the Authority is up to £250k

### Risk Management Issues

As the project is still at the business planning stage, it is proposed that a funding commitment is made subject to receipt of a detailed business plan and confirmation that the full funding package has been secured.

# CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below

Signed: Chris Moore Director of Corporate Services

**1. Scrutiny Committee: N/A**

**2. Local Member(s)** - Cllr. Emlyn Dole and Cllr Dot Jones

**3. Community / Town Council - N/A**

**4. Relevant Partners**

Consultation and support has been received from the following:

- A high number of young people and skaters
- Upper Gwendraeth Valley Sports Club and Community Association
- Sports Development – positive discussions with Area Sports and Leisure Manager and Active Young People Officer have taken place
- Rugby and Football Clubs
- Family Centre
- Scout's Association
- Local retailers e.g. Andrew's Shop
- Great Mountain Club
- Care in the Community
- Old Age Group
- Doctor's Surgery

**5. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations - N/A**

**Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information**

**List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:**

**THERE ARE NONE**

## EXECUTIVE BOARD

1<sup>ST</sup> JULY 2019

### ORIEL MYRDDIN TRUST GOVERNANCE & RESILIENCE REVIEW

#### RECOMMENDATIONS / KEY DECISIONS REQUIRED:

1. To consider the nature of the future relationship with Oriel Myrddin Trust (OMT);
2. To delegate authority to the Director of Communities, in consultation with the lead member for Culture, Sport and Tourism, to agree the management arrangements between the Trust and CCC over a transition period.

#### REASONS:

1. A Governance & Resilience review (“the review”) of the OMT and its plans for redevelopment was commissioned during 2018 with a view to clarifying the roles and responsibilities of the stakeholders and informing structures to support a capital redevelopment plan.
2. The review concluded in January 2019 and the Trust have started to put in place the recommendations of the report.
3. A Governance Road map has been produced which charts the journey of the Trust through a transition period in which CCC has a key role to play.
4. The Trust has submitted applications to Arts Council Wales (ACW) and CCC for capital funding to support the redevelopment of the gallery. The application to CCC will be the subject of a future report.
5. Changes in the governance structure are necessary whether or not the capital redevelopment project is supported.

**Exec Board Decision Required** YES – 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2019

**Council Decision Required** NO

#### EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:-

Cllr. Peter Hughes-Griffiths (Culture, Sport & Tourism Portfolio Holder)

**Directorate:**

**Communities**

**Name of Head of Service:**

Ian Jones

**Report Author:**

Jane Davies

**Department for Communities**

**Designations:**

Head of Leisure

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# EXECUTIVE BOARD

1<sup>ST</sup> JULY 2019

## ORIEL MYRDDIN TRUST GOVERNANCE & RESILIENCE REVIEW

### 1. Background

Oriel Myrddin (OMT) is a charitable trust governed by a Charity Commission scheme of 11 November 1993 and registered as a charity in England and Wales (charity registration number 1031498). The Scheme provides for Carmarthenshire County Council (CCC) to appoint trustees and to be the 'custodian trustee' for the Trust of the existing gallery building (OMG).

The current trust board consists of eight County Councillors and two Town Councillors. The operations of the gallery are undertaken by staff employed by CCC and utilising CCC systems and practice. It has become apparent that the role of CCC as custodian trustee and the wider corporate role should be more clearly maintained to comply with the requirements of charity law and recognised good practice within the sector.

A Governance & Resilience review was commissioned in order to propose a way forward and in parallel to the trust's ambition to redevelop the gallery. The review was concluded in January 2019 and the Trust have started to put in place the recommendations of the report.

### 2. Purpose

CCC should now consider the form and nature of its future relationship with OMT and develop the substance of how that relationship is managed.

Advice has been taken from Geldards LLP on behalf of CCC and VWV are advising the Trust. Golant Media Ventures are the lead consultant advising on the Governance & Resilience review and the parallel capital project application.

### 3. Governance & transition

The legal advisers agree that OMG should be treated as a wholly separate and independent organisation – specifically

*"OMG has been established by the Scheme and should be treated as a wholly separate and independent organisation. We note that Golant Media Ventures ("GMV") have already advised on this aspect and the need to have independence from CCC and we agree with this aspect of their advice. To be clear, a charity is run by trustees who have a legal duty to act only in furtherance of the charitable objects for the public benefit."* Geldards LLP Mar 2019



In order to achieve this the composition of the Trust Board must be such that there can be non-conflicted decisions made by a quorum of Trustees (4). At the Board's meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> January and in consultation with CCC as the key stakeholder the Board agreed to advertise for, select and recommend for appointment five trustees with no relationship to CCC or CTC to ensure compliance with legal and regulatory responsibilities and to make decisions with an appropriate degree of independence from CCC / CTC. Recruitment is well underway and looks likely to identify the required numbers for nomination at the next Board meeting scheduled for late April.

The Trusts legal advisers have mapped out the process for the legal and regulatory changes required to develop the trust clearly in their "Governance Road Map" paper. One of the priority actions is to establish a new incorporated charity and in a controlled and managed way migrate the assets and operations from the existing unincorporated trust.

The road map is supported by a note of "Transitional Arrangements". This paper concludes that the "separation" of OMT from CCC is in essence a demerger the practical steps for which would be delivered over a "transitional period". The paper is silent on the length of a "transitional period" which would be the subject of negotiation between the non-conflicted trustees and CCC.

#### **4. Resilience**

It is understood that during the transition period the interests of CCC, OMT and ACW are aligned to ensure there is sufficient capacity to:

- a. Continue running the Gallery building and programme as currently
- b. Setup NewCo and manage the transition to it (per the roadmap)
- c. Recruit new staff
- d. Support revenue fundraising and advocacy
- e. Deliver the capital project
- f. Relaunch the gallery

Steps a and b are necessary whether the capital project goes ahead or not.

Steps c to f assume that the capital project is supported and the business plan includes financial modelling for this scenario. The financial modelling is based on full independence in a social enterprising culture where investment in posts in the staffing structure around fundraising and business development generates returns in grants from Trusts and foundations & philanthropic giving in excess of their cost.

Current capacity is underpinned by

- a. The continuation of revenue funding from CCC;
- b. The continuation of support from CCC;
- c. The continuation of trading services by CCC on behalf of OMT;
- d. The existing staffing, currently employed by CCC on behalf of OMT;
- e. The appointment of new trustees and their active involvement led by OMT Chair in overseeing, directing and proactively supporting steps (b)-(f) above; and
- f. The continuation of revenue funding by ACW

The financial modelling for the current and future operations is based on a continuation of current levels of support to the Gallery, specifically annual grants of £88k, £47k and £4.5k respectively from CCC, ACW and CTC. This is supported by CCC's revenue budget 2019-20 to 2021-22. Assuming ACW and CCC agree in principle to this funding continuing then points b – f above will be the subject of negotiation between CCC and OMT constructed in such a way that when OMT / New OMG's boards deem that they have sufficient capacity they can withdraw from the agreements and by so doing bring the transition period to an end.

## 5. Capital Project

OMT approved the submission of its proposals for the capital redevelopment to CCC at its Board meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> January with an application for further funding, now confirmed at £1,094,000. This is in addition to the agreement for the use of 26/27 King Street and the nature of the arrangements by which those properties will be made available to the scheme is for further consideration. This would take the total level of investment in the scheme to £1,345,000.

CCC has taken legal advice on its options for ensuring that the scheme, if it is to progress, is sufficiently protected for future public benefit with minimal risk.

There are three ways in which CCC might achieve a reduction in investment risk referred to in the advice from Geldards LLP. The preferred option is option 3 in which non conflicted trustees of OMT agree with CCC management arrangements for a transition period.

OMT would have to achieve independence by the end of a transition period however and the supplemental advice indicates

*"This is of course a matter for negotiation between CCC and the charity trustees of the Charity and would need to be proportionate to the amount of the grant /funding/ contributions provided by CCC to the Charity. However, as a guide, it is not uncommon for such a term to be for 25 years, perhaps with a break exercisable at 12 years.*

*Following on from this and linked to option 3 outlined in our Advice dated 28.2.19, CCC could explore the possibility of leasing the additional two buildings that it has acquired (assuming these have been acquired by CCC using its own funds and not funds it is holding for the Charity a custodian trustee) supplemented by a management/operation agreement." Geldards LLP March 2019.*

What is emerging therefore is a model in which OMT/ New OMG, as an entirely independent organisation, with sufficient non conflicted trustees, enters into agreements with CCC for the delivery of services during a transition period, in which it retains controlling influence, but which satisfies concerns from CCC around operational risks to such an extent that it would consider investment. Mitigating factors to reduce the risk might be included as part of CCC's offer of grant.

Likewise CCC would have an outcomes led agreement with OMG for the delivery of the principles of its Arts Strategy 2018 – 2022 which would form the basis for payment of the annual revenue grant. This is akin to the existing arrangement between OMT and ACW.

## 6. Recommendations

A “demerger” of OMT and CCC is necessary in order to comply with the legal and regulatory environment in which the trust operates. The status quo as has existed to the end of 2018 is therefore not an option. It is assumed that CCC will continue to support OMG with its revenue support grant.

The options for CCC are therefore to support the Trust to improve, without capital investment or to support the Trust to improve and invest in the capital scheme. The potential of the capital scheme is the subject of a separate report. A series of agreements will need to be negotiated with the trust in either scenario and it is therefore suggested that authority is delegated to the Director of Communities, in consultation with the lead member for Culture, Sport and Tourism, to progress with those agreements and define the nature of the relationship throughout the transition period and beyond.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?

NO

## IMPLICATIONS

<p><b>I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report :</b></p>						
<b>Signed: Ian Jones</b>		<b>Head of Leisure</b>				
Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
<b>NO</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NOT AT THIS STAGE</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>NOT AT THIS STAGE</b>
<p>Legal The steps outlined in the report are necessary for the legal and regulatory framework within which the Trust will now need to operate. SPM</p>						

## CONSULTATIONS

Title of Document	Locations that the papers are available for public inspection
GMV Final report - Jan 2019	Oriol Myrddin Gallery
VVV Governance Roadmap – Feb 2019	Oriol Myrddin Gallery
Geldards LLP Advice to CCC – Mar 2019	Oriol Myrddin Gallery
Minutes of Oriol Myrddin Trust Meetings	Oriol Myrddin Gallery

# Agenda Item 11

By virtue of paragraph(s) 14 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) (Wales) Order 2007.

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