



South West Wales Strategic Development Plan (SDP) (2026-2051)

Draft Delivery Agreement

December 2025



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council



Parc Cenedlaethol
Arfordir Penfro
Pembrokeshire Coast
National Park

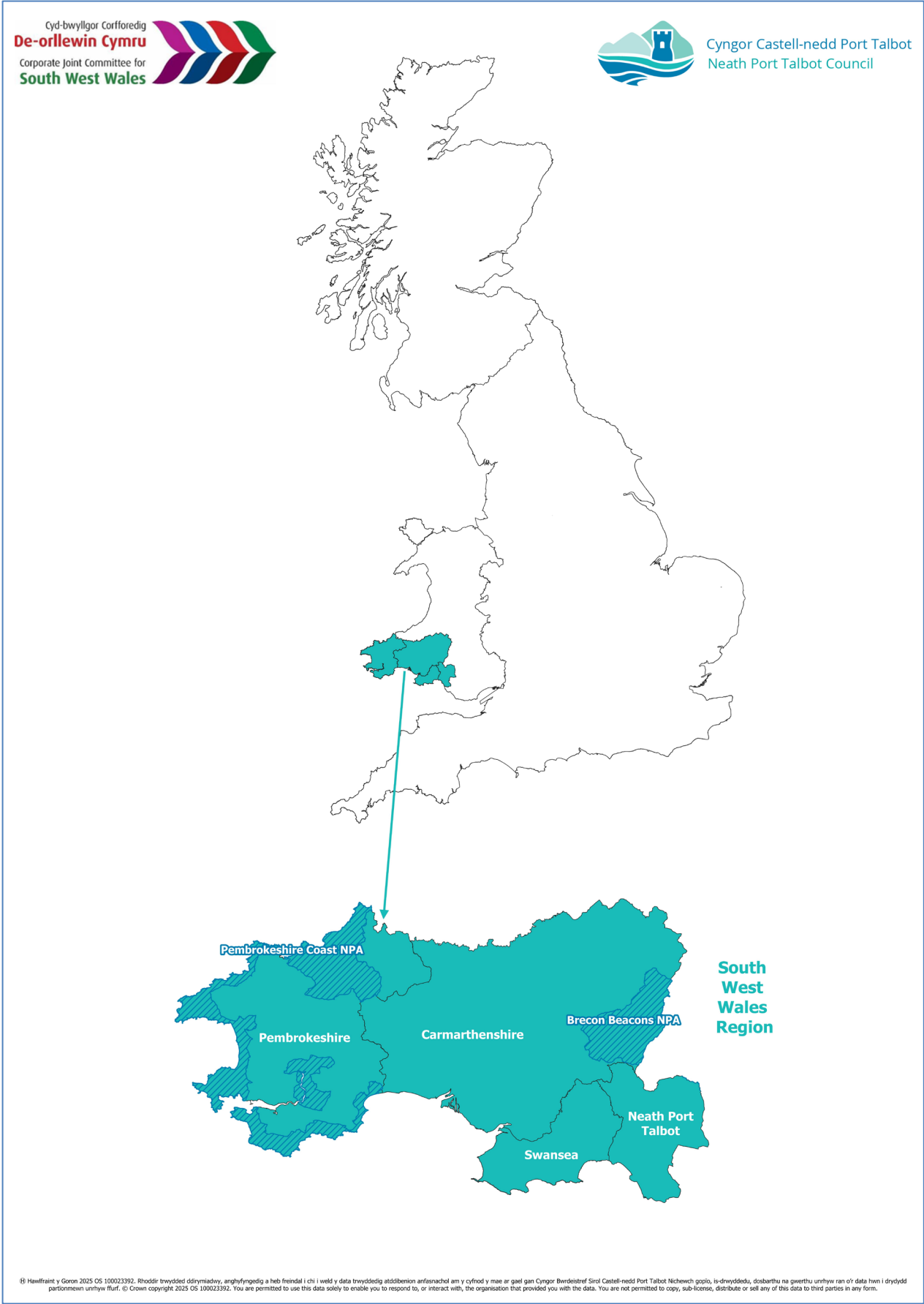


Bannau
Brycheiniog



Cyngor **Abertawe**
Swansea Council

Figure 1: Map of the South West Wales Region





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1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The South West Wales Region (SWWR) has a strong determination to align and leverage the new statutory powers of Corporate Joint Committees (CJCs). This presents a unique opportunity to develop transformational policies and interventions by integrating economic wellbeing, spatial planning, and transport planning. The SWWR aims to achieve this through the preparation of the key plans listed below and integration with key corporate policies that aim to promote productivity, inclusivity and sustainability in our region:
- Regional Economic Frameworks
 - Strategic Development Plans (SDP).
 - Regional Transport Plans (RTP).
- 1.2 In terms of spatial planning, the SDP will play a pivotal role in shaping the future growth of the region by setting out strategic proposals and land-use policies over the period 2026-2051.
- 1.3 By covering a wider geographical area, the SDP will ensure alignment and cooperation across the local government administrative boundaries in the SWWR, reflecting the ways in which people live, how markets operate, and how the transport system and the region's businesses all interact and function. This represents a more joined-up approach than has previously been employed; aligned tightly to economic development ambitions and our vision for a more strategic approach to both land-use and transport planning.
- 1.4 The SDP will function as a crucial link between the National Plan: Future Wales and Local Development Plans (LDPs). It will establish a strategic framework to guide the preparation of future LDP Lites (LDPL), ensuring coherence and alignment with broader regional and national objectives.
- 1.5 Whilst the SDP is a statutory requirement, it will be tailored to address the key issues and drivers for the region. In the 15-year life span of the Swansea Bay City Deal, the investment portfolio will boost the regional economy by at least £1.8 billion, while generating more than 9,000 jobs. City Deal programmes and projects are based on key themes including economic acceleration, life science and well-being, energy, smart manufacturing and digital. in line with the Well Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act

2015.

- 1.6 This document marks the first step in the development of the SDP and sets out how and when stakeholders and the community can become involved in the plan-making process. It also includes a comprehensive timetable for its preparation setting out clear timelines and milestones for key stages of the process and funding requirements. This approach is designed to foster engagement and ensure that all voices are heard.

2. Policy Context

Our Ambition – an enterprising and ambitious, balanced and inclusive, resilient and sustainable region

- 2.1 The South West Wales Region (SWWR) has been working successfully as a partnership of the 4 local authorities, Neath Port Talbot, Swansea, Pembrokeshire and Carmarthenshire (and two National Parks, Pembrokeshire and Brecon) of South West Wales through the Swansea Bay City Deal – a £1.3bn programme covering digital innovation, infrastructure, energy, smart manufacturing, economic acceleration, skills and challenge. Please see Figure 1 for a map of the region.
- 2.2 The South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee (SWWCJC) was formally constituted in January 2022, ensuring we build on the collaborative work and reputation already in place with the City Deal. SWWCJC is our legal name.
- 2.3 SWWR represents the joint commitment made up of the four local authorities of South West Wales (and two National Parks), the UK Government and Welsh Government, to build on the region's sectoral strengths. South West Wales has a diverse economy and unique set of natural and cultural assets, underpinned by the quality of its coastal and rural environment, industrial heritage and capacity and university presence.
- 2.4 The South West Wales Regional Economic Delivery Plan (REDP) (2021-30) sets a 10 year vision for building a resilient, and sustainable economy. The Plans ambitions aims to lead the UK in clean energy and net zero transition, strengthen the local business base, grow the experience economy, deliver inclusive and equitable growth and to co ordinate regionally for strategic impact. The Plan builds on the Swansea City Deal and the 2014 Economic Regeneration Strategy.
- 2.5 SWWR takes a comprehensive approach to achieving the three strategic missions of being a more competitive, connected and resilient region – from the focus on clusters; research and innovation; to green investment plans; infrastructure that connects within and across our places; and an emphasis on increasing our workforce size and quality and demand- driven skills. Liveability and productivity are hallmarks of SWWR, and a resilient and embedded business base.

2.6 The focused goals detailed below respond directly to each of the missions highlighted in the REDP – tackling economic disparity & boosting growth; improving physical & digital infrastructure; enhancing innovation capability & capacity; and, decarbonising our environment by 2050. One aim is to position South West Wales as a UK leader in renewable energy with a focus on industrial decarbonization, innovation and supply chain development. Responding to the climate challenge is at the core of our approach and runs through each of our strategic goals, ensuring focus on the green economy; sustainable housing and transport; and energy security.

Figure 2: REDP - Ambitions and Missions (Extract from REDP)



- 2.7 The SDP will play a crucial role in aligning regional strategies across the SWWR and is essential for promoting sustainable and resilient growth. By providing a cohesive framework, the SDP ensures that key sectors—such as land use, transport, housing, and economic development—are addressed in an integrated manner rather than in isolation.
- 2.8 This alignment of policies supports long-term planning that balances economic growth with environmental sustainability and social equity. Through a shared vision, the SDP will enable the region to make strategic decisions that not only meet current needs but also anticipate future challenges, including climate change, infrastructure improvements, and increasing housing demand.
- 2.9 Of equal importance, the SDP will drive collaboration between different areas of the SWWR, shifting the focus from a zero-sum approach—where one area's gain is seen as another's loss—to a perspective of mutual benefit. By transparently identifying and balancing strategic trade-offs, the SDP will ensure that regional growth is coordinated and sustainable, optimising the use of shared resources and seizing opportunities for the collective benefit of the entire region. In conclusion, the SDP is vital for aligning the region's strategies and ensuring that SWWR's growth is not only cohesive and coordinated but also geared towards creating a resilient, equitable, and prosperous future for all.

Opportunity of the CJC Policy Context

- 2.10 In June 2022, the requirement for local authorities to produce a Strategic Development Plan (SDP) was transferred to the four regional CJs by the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021. The Act established four CJs in Wales: North, Mid, South West and South East Wales.
- 2.11 The Act responded to the need for a strategic approach to both land-use and transport planning, working in a more joined-up regional way than has previously been achieved, and aligned tightly to ambitions around economic development.
- 2.12 To that end, CJs are required via statutory instrument to promote economic wellbeing, spatial planning and regional transport planning. The Act states that the CJs will support the integration of transport and land use planning through their three broad functions,

which are to prepare:

- Regional Economic Framework (in SWWR's case, this is reflected in the REDP);
- Strategic Development Plan (SDPs); and
- Regional Transport Plan (RTPs).

- 2.13 Through the recent transition to this new form of regional public body, we have a unique opportunity to develop transformational regional policy & interventions. This will be achieved through achieving connectivity across economic well-being, spatial planning and transport, to ensure we leverage their potential.
- 2.14 Our focus on placemaking and driving inclusive growth in the region depends on being able to create cohesion between the new statutory powers and SWWR has designed its portfolio of strategies and plans to achieve this.
- 2.15 The statutory guidance for CJsCs (published on 25 January 2022), recognises the concurrence of economic wellbeing duties, where constituent councils and CJsCs have broadly the same powers. In this case, the CJC, "would seek to agree a process with its constituent councils that sets out how the exercise of concurrent functions will be managed."
- 2.16 However, for the non-concurrent powers of strategic spatial planning and regional transport planning, the "delivery of functions at the local level will be dependent on the decisions made regionally by CJsCs; that is in terms of the nature of the decision and the timing of when decisions are made".
- 2.17 The guidance focused on the statutory and constitutional arrangements for CJsCs, as opposed to specific detail on the functions to be exercised. To that end, SWWR is required to develop both an SDP and RTP following the publication of separate guidance specifically for these non-concurrent duties.
- 2.18 As strategic planning and transport are key elements in placemaking, it is also important that the RTP and SDP are closely aligned. Strategic development planning should establish mechanisms by which this can be achieved moving forward, complementing overall aims for economic wellbeing.

3. Role of the Delivery Agreement (DA) and Community Involvement Scheme (CIS)

- 3.1 The Delivery Agreement (DA) and Community Involvement Scheme (CIS) marks the formal start of the SDP preparation process. A core aim of the development plan system in Wales is early, effective, and meaningful community involvement, which is intended to build a broad consensus on the spatial strategy, strategic policies, and proposals in the SDP. This participatory approach ensures inclusivity and reflection of the community's needs and aspirations.

Components of the Delivery Agreement (DA)

- 3.2 The DA is a public statement that contains the Community Involvement Scheme (CIS), setting out how and when stakeholders and the community can become involved in the plan-making process. This ensures transparency and inclusivity from the outset. It also includes a comprehensive timetable for preparing the SDP setting out clear timelines and milestones for various stages of the process and funding.
- 3.3 Functions of the DA:
- **Reinforces the SDP's Role:** Highlights the SDP as a critical regional tool within the Corporate Joint Committee (CJC) area.
 - **Engages Community and Stakeholders:** Notifies when and how they can be involved in the SDP process.
 - **Sets Realistic Expectations:** Clarifies the CJC's capabilities in terms of time, resources, and expectations.
 - **Secures Resources:** Ensures budget and staff resources are allocated for the SDP preparation.
 - **Clarifies Scope and Influence:** Defines the plan's scope and its potential impact.
 - **Facilitates Coordination:** Ensures alignment with other regional strategies and documents such as Regional Transport Plans and Growth/City Deals.

Table 1 provides a broad summary of the stages involved in producing and agreeing a Delivery Agreement.

Table 1: summary of the steps involved in preparing the DA.

Stage	Description	Timing
Stage 1: Initiation	Prepare draft DA & informally involve specific consultation bodies on the scope and content. The draft DA will be revised where appropriate.	September-December 2025
Stage 2: Consultation	Consultation on draft DA (5 weeks)	January – February 2026
Stage 3: Approval	DA adopted by resolution of the CJC.	March 2026
Stage 4: Agreement	Submission of final DA to Welsh Government for agreement.	March 2026
Stage 5: Publicity	Publish the approved DA with copies made available for inspection at the Principal Office(s) of the CJC and on its website.	As soon as practicable after WG have agreed the DA

- 3.4 The DA must be approved by resolution of the CJC in accordance with SDP Regulation 11(2) before being submitted to the Welsh Government for agreement. Approval of the DA marks the formal start of the plan preparation process and the CJC is committed to adhering to the stated timescales and consultation processes. The DA must be publicised, with copies made available for inspection at the Principal Office(s) of the CJC and on its website, in accordance with SDP Regulation 12.

4. Preparation of the Strategic Development Plan (SDP)

- 4.1 There are a number of key stages involved in the SDP process and each of these provides opportunities for dialogue to take place as follows:

Key stage		Opportunities for involvement
Stage 1	Delivery Agreement Preparation and submission	Stakeholder and informal public consultation
Stage 2	Pre-Deposit Preparation and recruitment	Updates provided on SWW CJC website
Stage 3	Preferred Strategy preparation & public consultation	6 weeks formal public consultation
Stage 4	Deposit Plan preparation & public consultation	6 weeks formal public consultation
Stage 5	Submission to PEDW & Welsh Government for EIP	Updates provided on SWW CJC website
Stage 6	Examination	Opportunity to attend and participate in the examination hearing sessions
Stage 7	Inspector's Report	Updates provided on SWW CJC website
Stage 8	Adoption	Updates provided on SWW CJC website

Governance

- 4.2 Statutory guidance required the establishment of a Strategic Planning Sub-Committee (SPSC), with responsibility for preparing the SDP for approval by the CJC. The SPSC will ensure political representation and input into the preparation and implementation of the SDP. The SPSC will provide a platform for involving others and ensuring appropriate expert and sector specific advice is available to support the CJC's decisions.
- 4.3 The SPSC Sub-Committee is comprised of 6 Members, including the Executive Member with responsibility for Planning from each of the 4 Constituent Councils and 2 Members representing the two National Park Authorities. The Sub-Committee makes recommendations on key aspects of the DA for approval and also considers the requirement for resourcing the plan process overall.

Key Outcomes

4.4 In accordance with the SDP 'Manual', the plan will aim to achieve the following key outcomes:

- Support sustainable development and quality places based around the National Sustainable Placemaking Outcomes, aligned with Future Wales, national policy (set out in PPW) integrated with an SA/SEA/HRA, including Welsh language and the requirements of the WBFGA 2015.
- Be based on and underpinned by early, effective and meaningful community involvement to understand and consider a wide range of views, with the aim of building a broad consensus on the spatial strategy, policies and proposals.
- Be based on a robust understanding of the role and function of the region, as well as connections beyond.
- Consider how cities, towns and settlements function individually and collectively both regionally and as sub-regions (where appropriate) thereby shaping the spatial strategy. This should be underpinned by clear evidence to deliver on the key issues identified in the region.
- Be distinctive by setting out clearly how the South West Wales will develop and change, giving certainty for communities, developers and business and provide the framework for LDP 'Lites' (LDPL).
- Be resilient to climate change and support the transition to a low carbon society in line with the latest carbon reduction targets and budgets as set out in the Environment (Wales) Act (Part 2) and discharging the requirements of section 6 biodiversity and resilience of ecosystems duty.
- Help discharge the SWWR's socio-economic duty.
- Incorporate the principles of Placemaking, the Sustainable Transport Hierarchy and the Energy Hierarchy as set out in PPW.
- Ensure the sustainable management of natural resources in accordance with the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 and other relevant legislation.
- Deliver what is intended through viable plans, taking into account necessary infrastructure requirements, financial viability and other market factors.
- Be proactive and responsive with plans kept up-to-date and flexible to accommodate change.

Legislation, Policy, and Guidance relevant to preparing the SDP

- 4.5 The Town and Country Planning (Strategic Development Plan) (Wales) Regulations 2021 establish the procedures for preparing Strategic Development Plans (SDPs) in Wales. The main objective of these regulations is to ensure that SDPs are consistently and effectively prepared across the country.
- 4.6 The Welsh Government has also prepared the Strategic Development Plan Manual (SDP Manual) as a comprehensive guide for the preparation of SDPs. It offers practical advice to ensure that these plans are effective, deliverable, and align with the overarching policies and objectives of the National Development Framework (NDF), "Future Wales: The National Plan 2040," as well as the principles of placemaking outlined in the national planning policy, Planning Policy Wales (PPW).
- 4.7 The draft version of the SDP Manual was distributed to all Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) in the autumn of 2022. The final version is scheduled for publication in the Spring of 2026. This timeline allows for adequate feedback and refinement, ensuring that the final document is robust and useful for all CJsCs, and LPAs involved in the planning process. The following documents are also relevant to the preparation of SDPs and should be considered alongside the SDP Manual:
- Future Wales: National Development Framework (NDF)
 - Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (PCPA 2004) Part 6
 - Local Government Elections (Wales) Act 2021 (LGEW Act)
 - Town and Country Planning (Strategic Development Plan) (Wales) Regulations 2021
 - Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (WBFGA 2015)
 - Planning Policy Wales (PPW): Latest edition by the Welsh Government
 - Development Plans Community Guide (Edition 2) (2022): Produced by the Welsh Government and Planning Aid Wales
 - Local Development Plan Examinations: Procedure Guidance (2015): To be updated by Planning and Environment Decisions Wales (PEDW)
 - LDPs: Preparing for Submission – Guidance for Local Planning Authorities (2015): Also, to be updated by PEDW
 - Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Sustainability Appraisal (SA), and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)
 - Environment (Wales) Act 2016: Includes Section 6 and Area Statements
 - Environment Act 1995 includes Section 62(2) which places a duty on relevant public bodies and persons to have regard to the purposes for which National

Parks are designated. In addition, the SDP will have due regard to National Park Management Plans.

- Strategic Development Plans Community Guide prepared by Planning Aid Wales.

Integrated Assessment Approach: Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (ISA) incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment (SA/SEA) and other related assessments

- 4.8 The SDP must be subject to Sustainability Appraisal (SA) incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) as required by the European Union Directive 2001/42/EC & Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes (Wales) Regulations 2004 and the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended by the by 2015 Act). The CJC recognise the value and opportunities for an integrated assessment approach in preparing the SDP. As such, the SA/SEA will be an Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (ISA) integrating statutory requirements and key elements from the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act (WBFGA) 2015, the Equalities Act, Welsh language standards, Health Impact Assessment (HIA) and the Environment Act (section 6) (where relevant) into a single Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (ISA) will enable a more transparent, holistic and rounded assessment of the sustainability implications of growth options, objectives, policies and proposals in which economic and social issues are considered alongside environmental elements.
- 4.9 The process of SA/SEA is an iterative one that will be carried out throughout plan preparation and consists of six essential stages:
- Establish policy context, identify and document evidence base, identify sustainability issues and develop ISA/SEA objectives and indicators
 - Consult WG, CADW and NRW on ISA Scoping Report
 - Publish ISA Report of Strategic options and Preferred Strategy
 - Publish Deposit ISA Report including Environmental Report (with SDP)
 - Publish the final ISA report following the Inspectors Report and adoption
 - Monitoring and implementation of the ISA
- 4.10 At the outset of the ISA/SEA process, there will be an opportunity for stakeholders to comment on the ISA Scoping Report that sets out how the ISA/SEA process will be undertaken. The findings of the ISA/SEA work will be evidenced at key stages in the SDP preparation process. Reports will be prepared, and subject to consultation with stakeholders, in parallel with the Preferred Strategy consultation and Deposit SDP

consultation. A Final ISA Report will be submitted along with all other SDP documentation when submitted to PEDW and Welsh Government for examination. The statutory Environment Bodies will be consulted at all the stages referred to above and there will be wider on-going dialogue with these bodies as the process proceeds.

- 4.11 A Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) will not be integrated with the ISA as it uses a different precautionary testing mechanism. The ISA will summarise the HRA findings as part of its assessment of effects on biodiversity.

Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)

- 4.12 The Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) is a process mandated by the Habitats Directive, (Article 6(3)) to assess whether any land use plan or project is likely to significantly affect a European site, either individually or cumulatively with other projects. By following the HRA key stages, the SDP can be developed in accordance with legal requirements while safeguarding the integrity of European sites and their associated habitats and species.

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

- 4.13 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (PCPA) sets out the definition of sustainable development for the planning system in Wales, mirroring the definition in the WBFGA 2015. “Sustainable development” means the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the well-being goals. The WBFGA 2015 sets seven well-being goals which all public bodies are required to achieve:
- A prosperous Wales
 - A resilient Wales
 - A healthier Wales
 - A more equal Wales
 - A Wales of cohesive communities
 - A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language
 - A globally responsible Wales
- 4.14 The SDP will show how it contributes to achieving the well-being goals. The approach taken to appraise the plan through the ISA will enable the CJC to understand where the plan can maximise its contribution. The well-being goals should be integral to the preparation of the ISA Scoping Report and used to inform the review of evidence, identify

issues and structure the ISA framework which will assess the plan's growth options, objectives, policies and proposals.

4.15 The WBFGA 2015 also identifies five ways of working which public bodies need to demonstrate they have carried out when undertaking their duty to achieve sustainable development. These are:

- Looking to the long term so that we do not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
- Understanding the root causes of issues to prevent them from occurring or getting worse.
- Taking an integrated approach so that public bodies look at all the well-being goals in deciding on their well-being objectives.
- Involving a diversity of the population in the decisions that affect them; and
- Working with others in a collaborative way to find shared sustainable solutions.

4.16 The well-being goals, objectives and the five ways of working will inform the development of the ISA framework. This framework will form the basis to assess the likely significant effects of the SDP. This iterative process will test the strengths, weaknesses and likely environmental effects of proposed components to develop and refine the SDP as it progresses.

Evidence Base

4.17 The SDP will be underpinned by a robust and proportionate evidence base tailored to the specific challenges it addresses. The CJC is tasked with continuously reviewing development-related matters within its area as per section 61 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (PCPA 2004). This review process is ongoing, both before and after the adoption of the SDP.

4.18 In preparing an SDP, the CJC will conduct a comprehensive audit of the evidence used for Local Development Plan (LDP) preparation within the region. This audit involves critically analysing and rationalising standard methodologies used for formulating and collating evidence, ensuring a sound foundation for further development of the evidence base. Additionally, Annual Monitoring Reports (AMRs) will play a crucial role in informing the SDP by identifying where and why existing LDP policies have been successful or are not being implemented as intended.

- 4.19 **Consideration of Base Date Relevance:** the relevance of the base date of existing evidence in relation to current national planning policy must be carefully evaluated. National policies evolve over time, with new policies being introduced and others being rescinded, impacting the evidence base that supports plans. It is essential to assess whether the existing evidence remains 'fit for purpose' or needs updating to align with these policy changes.
- 4.20 **Integration of Local Development Plans (LDPs):** while the SDP will take into account existing LDPs across the region, it will not merely amalgamate their policies, proposals, and allocations without considering a long-term strategy for the region. The commitments and allocations from current adopted LDPs will contribute to the short to medium-term components of the first-generation SDPs.
- 4.21 A clear vision for the region, addressing the drivers of change and responding to opportunities, will be important for the long-term direction. The vision will have to make choices on expressing a sustainable spatial strategy, the role of places and locations for strategic land-use activities, as well as strategies for each LPA within the SDP area. Whilst LDPs can provide the building blocks for the short to medium term period of an SDP, the long-term vision should be considered afresh.
- 4.22 **Anticipated Evidence Base Assessments:** the anticipated evidence base assessments required for the SDP preparation are detailed in **Appendix 2**.

Independent Examination & Soundness

- 4.23 The CJC must not submit the SDP unless it considers the plan is ready for examination (Section 64(2) of the 2004 act). The SDP will also be considered against the tests of soundness set out in the SDP Manual. The three tests are:
- Test 1: Does the plan fit? (Is it clear that the SDP is consistent with other plans?)
 - Test 2: Is the plan appropriate? (Is the plan appropriate for the region in the light of the evidence?)
 - Test 3: Will the plan deliver? (Is it likely to be effective?)

Legal and Regulatory Compliance in Plan Preparation

4.24 The plan preparation process must comply with a range of legal and regulatory procedural requirements, including:

- The ISA (Integrated Sustainability Appraisal)
- The SEA (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations
- The HRA (Habitats Regulations Assessment) Regulations, and
- The CIS (Community Involvement Scheme).

4.25 Furthermore, the SDP must be in general conformity with Future Wales: The National Plan 2040. The CJC will also take into account the Planning and Environment Decisions Wales (PEDW) examination guidance, which outlines the process and key considerations for submission and examination.

Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)

4.26 The Corporate Joint Committee (CJC) will identify key Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) crucial for the implementation of strategic sites and proposals within the Strategic Development Plan (SDP). Additionally, the CJC will address broader matters on a more generic or regional basis. The preparation of regional SPG documents will offer an efficient, coherent, and consistent framework for detailed, topic-based planning guidance across South West Wales. This approach aims to reduce the need of creating similar SPG documents multiple times across the region, thereby promoting regional consistency and achieving financial efficiencies.

Monitoring, Review and Revision

4.27 Monitoring is a continuous process and does not end once a plan is adopted. It represents an essential feedback loop within the cyclical process of achieving sustainable development. Monitoring and review should be an ongoing function of the plan led system and is a vital aspect of evidence-based policy making. The key legislative requirements in respect of monitoring and review are as follows:

- PCPA 2004 (Section 61) states that a CJC must keep under review the matters which may be expected to affect the development of their area or the planning of its development.
- PCPA 2004 (Section 76) and SDP Regulation 40 states that a CJC must publish and submit to Welsh Government an AMR setting out how the objectives of the plan are being achieved, or not (by 31 October each year).

- PCPA 2004 (Section 69(1)) and SDP Regulation 39(1) collectively state that a CJC must review its SDP no longer than 6 years from the date of adoption.
- SDP Regulation 39(2) states the CJC must approve by resolution a report of a review prepared in accordance with Section 69(1) and before it is submitted to the Welsh Ministers in accordance with Section 69(2). The 'Review Report' (RR) should be submitted to Welsh Government, within six months of triggering the review process.
- Regulation 17 of the SEA Regulations require monitoring of certain plans to identify unforeseen adverse effects and enable appropriate remedial action to be taken.

Collaborative Working

4.28 Collaborative regional working will enhance the quality and efficiency of the SDP by integrating diverse perspectives, expertise, resources, and stakeholders. This collaborative approach will allow the CJC to:

- **Identify Common Goals:** Establish shared objectives that align with regional development priorities.
- **Share Information:** Promote transparency and informed decision-making through the exchange of data and insights.
- **Co-ordinate Actions:** Synchronise initiatives and activities to avoid duplication and optimise resource use.
- **Leverage Synergies:** Maximise the impact of combined efforts, creating more effective and efficient outcomes.

4.29 Moreover, collaborative working will foster:

- **Innovation:** Encouraging creative solutions to complex land-use challenges.
- **Learning and Adaptation:** Facilitating continuous improvement through shared experiences and best practices.
- **Public Trust and Participation:** Building confidence and engagement among community members through inclusive and transparent processes.

4.30 The SDP will extend its focus beyond the South West Wales Region. This includes engaging in collaborative efforts with other CJCs in Wales and relevant spatial planning bodies to address cross-regional issues. Such broad cooperation will ensure comprehensive and coherent planning that transcends regional boundaries, addressing wider geographical challenges and opportunities.

5. Community Involvement Scheme (CIS)

- 5.1 The CIS establishes a comprehensive framework detailing how the CJC will engage with the community and other stakeholders throughout the SDP process.
- 5.2 The CIS addresses those matters listed in SDP Regulation 8 and outlines the principles and mechanisms the CJC will use to encourage participation. This includes:
- Those general and specific consultation bodies to be involved in the process.
 - The timing and methods by which community involvement will be sought and when.
 - Explain how responses and representations received are taken into account when developing the content of the SDP.

Key principles for involvement

- 5.3 The following consultation principles will guide the CJC's approach to involving the local community and other stakeholders in the preparation of the SDP:
- **Commitment:** The CJC will seek to provide opportunities for the whole community (different age groups, local community groups, hard to reach groups and protected characteristic groups) including businesses, to engage at appropriate stages in the process including 'non-technical format' material as part of the process to encourage wider engagement.
 - **Inclusiveness:** The CJC will encourage the active participation of everyone who has an interest in, or who may be affected by, the SDP including producing user-friendly documents and using user friendly consultation techniques to encourage wider engagement with the community, including with children and young people.
 - **Appropriateness:** The CJC will seek to engage the community through the most appropriate methods as determined through consultation on this document.
 - **Transparency and accessibility:** The CJC will make all relevant information available on-line and undertake engagement in a transparent and open way and seek to maximise the use of new technology such as virtual consultation and social media.
 - **Accountability:** The CJC will publish on-line the results of community engagement and seek to ensure that all stakeholders are informed of the outcome of their involvement.
 - **Productivity:** The CJC will seek to use virtual consultation and community engagement to secure as much consensus as possible on the content of the SDP.
 - **Realism:** The CJC will seek to ensure that all parties involved in the process

understand and remain realistic about what can be achieved within the context of relevant legislation, Welsh Government guidance, and resources available.

- 5.4 The CJC places a strong emphasis on building consensus throughout the SDP preparation process. The CJC aims to ensure that all stakeholders actively engage from the very beginning. **Appendix 3** sets the CJC's intended approach for community engagement and consultation at each key stage of the plan preparation. This is intended to ensure transparency, inclusiveness, and responsiveness throughout the entire SDP process, encouraging active and continuous participation from all relevant parties.

Welsh Language and Bilingual Engagement

- 5.5 The CJC is committed to promoting and supporting the Welsh language, ensuring its vitality and growth across Wales. In compliance with legislative requirements, the SDP process must integrate considerations for the Welsh language from the outset. Specifically, under section 62(6A) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (PCPA 2004), the Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (ISA) must include an assessment of the plan's potential effects on the use of the Welsh language.
- 5.6 Planning Policy Wales (PPW) outlines policy requirements for the Welsh language, while Technical Advice Note 20 (TAN20): 'Planning and the Welsh Language' offers guidance on its consideration within development plans and the ISA process. The CJC will evaluate the potential impacts of the SDP on the Welsh language during the ISA process. This evaluation will be documented in the deposit plan, detailing how the Welsh language considerations have been addressed. The ISA process will assess the impact of growth scale and location, vision, objectives, policies, and proposals on the Welsh language. If evidence suggests a detrimental impact, the CJC will consider amending the strategy or identifying mitigation measures.
- 5.7 At every stage of the SDP, Welsh Language Standards will be upheld, with bilingual engagement facilitated through various measures:
- Correspondence will be accepted in both Welsh and English and replies to Welsh correspondence will be in Welsh.
 - All consultation materials, including letters, comment forms, public notices, and newsletters, will be bilingual.

- The SDP website will have bilingual content.
- Public meetings will be conducted bilingually if requested in advance, with prior notification required for translation services.
- Draft SDP documents will be available in Welsh upon request, and the final adopted SDP will be available in both Welsh and English formats.

Who will the CJC consult?

- 5.8 The SDP Regulations outline the formal requirements for engaging stakeholders in the formulation of the DA (SDP Regulations 7 and 9) including both specific and general consultation bodies and the public. This aligns with the Well-Being of Future Generations Act, which emphasises effective involvement and collaboration as two of its five ways of working. Accordingly, the CJC will actively seek to involve the following groups in the SDP preparation process. By engaging with these diverse groups, the CJC aims to ensure a comprehensive and inclusive approach to the SDP preparation process, reflecting the needs and aspirations of all stakeholders involved:

Member of the Public

- 5.9 Residents will be engaged through public consultations to ensure their views can be considered when shaping the development plan. The CJC will develop and maintain a consultation database that holds contact information and consultation details of those individuals, agencies, organisations and community groups that want to participate in the SDP process. The database will assist the CJC in the management of the SDP process and enable interested parties to be kept updated and informed of progress.
- 5.10 The EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) came into force in May 2018. This placed new restrictions on how organisations can hold and use personal data and defining rights about that data. As a result of the GDPR, any interested parties must give their consent, in writing, if they wish to be added to the new stakeholder database. Anyone who makes representations at any of the stages of SDP process will be deemed to have given their consent and will be added to the stakeholder database. This will enable the CJC to administer their comments and keep them informed. Representors will also be given the opportunity to receive correspondence in Welsh or English.
- 5.11 If any person, group, organisation or company wishes to be involved in the preparation of the SDP, they can request to be added to the stakeholder database by logging their contact details on the CJC website.

Local Authorities and Elected Members

- 5.12 Collaboration with neighbouring councils and elected representatives will ensure regional alignment and integration of strategies. Local Authorities will be formally consulted at every key stage of the SDP process through their respective Chief Executives and Leaders. Communication will be conducted via email. The CJC will also relay information and seek input from:

- Planning Officers Society Wales (POSW)
- West Wales Regional Planning Group (WWRPG)
- Relevant officers in other specialisms such as regional transport and economic development.
- The region's Chief Executives and directors will be engaged via respective fora, (the South West Wales Regional Director's Board (SWWRDB) and the Private Sector Advisory Board (PSAB))

- 5.13 To ensure that Local Authority Councillors are properly engaged in the SDP process, they can request to be added to the SDP database. This will allow them to be consulted and kept informed at every key stage of the SDP process. All communication with Councillors will be conducted via email, ensuring timely and direct updates. In addition, Local Authorities will help disseminate this information to their Councillors through established internal networks, helping to maintain clear lines of communication and ensuring that Councillors remain informed throughout the process.

Town and Community Councils

- 5.14 The role of Town and Community Councils in disseminating information to residents on matters of local importance is crucial. They serve as a vital link to communities across South West Wales, ensuring that residents are informed and engaged in local issues. Town and Community Councils will be formally consulted at every key stage of the SDP process, ensuring that their input and feedback are considered. These councils will be added to the SDP database, and all correspondence will be conducted via email, facilitating efficient and timely communication.

Welsh Government

- 5.15 SWWR will work closely with the Welsh Government to align with national policies, frameworks, and sustainable development goals.

Adjoining Corporate Joint Committees

5.16 The SWWR will engage and consult with other CJC's in Wales to:

- **Foster a Shared Purpose:** The pandemic has united public sector organisations like never before. Going forward, it will be vital to sustain this alignment around a common purpose to enhance collaboration and cohesion.
- **Promote Transparency and Openness:** Encouraging open communication, sharing information, and maintaining transparency will build trust and improve decision-making processes.
- **Leverage Expertise:** Drawing on the specialised knowledge from different business functions will be crucial to informing decisions and refining practices, particularly in areas such as strategic planning and transportation.
- **Encourage Cross-Boundary Collaboration:** Embracing collaboration across teams and organisations will help drive innovation and ensure that decisions remain people- focused, keeping communities at the heart of regional planning efforts.

Public Services Boards

5.17 Public Services Boards (PSBs) were established in 2015 to bring together local public service leaders to assess and address the well-being needs of their areas, as part of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. Board members typically include leaders from the local authority, health board, fire and rescue authority, Natural Resources Wales, as well as representatives from the voluntary sector, Welsh Government, the police forces, the police and crime commissioner and probation services. During key stages of preparing the SDP, the CJC will consult all Public Services Boards (PSBs) in Wales via email:

- Anglesey & Gwynedd Public Services Board
- Cardiff Public Services Board
- Carmarthenshire Public Services Board
- Ceredigion Public Services Board
- Conwy & Denbighshire Public Services Board
- Cwm Taf Morgannwg Public Services Board
- Flintshire & Wrexham Public Services Board
- Gwent Public Services Board
- Neath Port Talbot Public Services Board
- Pembrokeshire Public Services Board

- Powys Public Services Board
- Swansea Public Services Board
- Vale of Glamorgan Public Services Board

Businesses

- 5.18 The local business community, including industry leaders and Chambers of Commerce, will be involved in considering the impact on economic development and infrastructure.

Environmental Organisations

- 5.19 Engaging with NRW and environmental groups will ensure the SDP aligns with goals around sustainability, biodiversity, and climate action.

Transport and Infrastructure Partners

- 5.20 Collaboration with Transport for Wales and infrastructure providers to integrate land-use and sustainable transport planning.

Health and Education Sectors

- 5.21 Collaboration with health boards, schools, and higher education institutions will ensure services are planned in line with future growth and community needs.

Young People and Future Generations

- 5.22 Youth organisations, schools, and other platforms will ensure the voices of young people are included, focusing on the long-term impact of the plan.

Housing and Development Sector

- 5.23 Engagement with housing associations, developers, and landowners will be critical to discussing future housing needs and land allocation. Meeting the aims and objectives of the SDP will require both land and investment. Landowners, agents, and developers interested in participating in this process can request to be added to the SDP consultation database.
- 5.24 The Strategic Candidate Sites and Locations process will provide the opportunity for those who have an interest in land to submit sites and locations to be considered for development. A Call for Strategic Candidate Sites and Locations will be undertaken, and all proposals will need to be submitted via a standardised form. The form will contain the criteria required to assist in the assessment of the suitability of sites and locations for

inclusion as potential allocations in the SDP.

- 5.25 A threshold for accepting Strategic Candidate Sites and Locations will be set to ensure the plan remains strategically focused. This threshold will be specified up front to provide clarity of the process and avoid unnecessary work being undertaken for sites that will be immediately rejected. Defining appropriate thresholds, setting broad locational/constraints parameters in addition to making sure there is a wide range of information published to inform this process will give an important steer to site promoters on the size, quantum and type of site that will be allocated/proposed or safeguarded in the SDP. All stakeholders are strongly encouraged to familiarise themselves with the SDP Manual to fully understand their roles and responsibilities in the process. This will ensure effective participation and adherence to the established guidelines.

Specific Consultation Bodies

- 5.26 Specific Consultation Bodies, as defined by SDP Regulation 6, encompass statutory entities such as:
- Welsh Government
 - Natural Resources Wales (NRW)
 - Welsh Water
 - Utility companies (Wales & England)
 - Network Rail and Transport for Wales
 - Adjoining Corporate Joint Committees (CJCs)
 - Local Health Boards within or adjoining CJC area
 - All Town and Community Councils within or adjoining the CJC area
 - Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) within and adjacent to the CJC area (The Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) will utilise their existing communication networks to ensure that individual councillors are properly notified).
 - UK Government Departments if the SDP is likely to impact their interests. These bodies will be formally involved during the process.
- 5.27 General Consultation Bodies, as defined by SDP Regulation 5 include:
- voluntary bodies, some or all of whose activities benefit any part of the CJC's area,
 - bodies which represent the interests of different racial, ethnic or national groups in any part of the CJC's area,
 - bodies which represent the interests of different religious groups in any part of the CJC's area,

- bodies which represent the interests of disabled persons, within the meaning of section 6 of the Equality Act 2010(1), in any part of the CJC's area,
- bodies which represent the interests of persons carrying on business in any part of the CJC's area, and
- bodies which represent the interests of Welsh culture in any part of the CJC's area.

5.28 The use of umbrella groups as outlined above is critical to reaching as wide a cross-section of the community as possible. Greater use of networks could help reach harder-to-reach groups, including those of different racial or ethnic origin.

5.29 **Appendix 4** contains a proposed list of additional general consultation bodies.

5.30 This collaborative and inclusive approach will ensure that the SDP is reflective of the needs and aspirations of all stakeholders, supporting the well-being of current and future generations.

Engaging Hard-to-Reach Groups in the SDP Process

5.31 Hard-to-reach groups are segments of society that have historically been under-represented in the plan preparation process. Engaging these groups requires additional effort to ensure their involvement in the SDP process. A flexible approach to engagement is necessary, but this must occur within the specified participation and consultation periods.

5.32 To effectively engage hard-to-reach groups in the SDP process, the CJC will leverage existing agencies and groups, such as the PSBs, whenever possible. Additionally, trusted intermediaries may be employed to gather the views of those who lack the confidence to engage directly in the SDP process. The following groups have been identified as not having been sufficiently engaged in previous plan preparations and will be actively encouraged to participate:

- Young people and children
- People with disabilities
- Older people
- People with learning difficulties
- Homeless people
- Ethnic minorities
- Gypsies and Travellers

How will the CJC involve you

- 5.33 Information on the SDP process will be regularly updated on the CJC's website. Copies of the relevant documents associated with the SDP process will also be made available at the CJC's Principal Office and at each Local Government Principal Office in South West Wales as listed in **Appendix 5**.

Digital Technology for Engagement and Information Dissemination

- 5.34 The Covid-19 pandemic has emphasised the critical role of digital technology in maintaining effective communication and engagement with partners. During this period, organisations have increasingly relied on innovative digital solutions. Consequently, the default approach of the CJC throughout the SDP process will be to prioritise electronic communication and virtual engagement.

Addressing Digital Exclusion

- 5.35 Recognising that not everyone has access to the internet, the CJC is committed to ensuring inclusivity in its engagement process. For individuals without internet access:
- Hard copies of documents will be made available at specified locations.
 - Paper comment forms will be provided upon request.

Ensuring Clear and Accessible Consultation

- 5.36 The CJC is dedicated to making every stage of the consultation process as clear and accessible as possible. To facilitate this:
- Officers will be available (via pre-arranged appointments) to handle SDP related queries on weekdays during regular office hours.
 - Queries can be directed to the CJC via their web address or to the CJC's Principal Office.
- 5.37 By leveraging digital technologies and providing alternative access methods, the CJC aims to foster comprehensive and inclusive engagement throughout the SDP process.

Publicising the SDP Process

- 5.38 The CJC is committed to ensuring widespread awareness and active engagement throughout the SDP process. The steps to achieve this are:
- **Direct Contact:** The CJC will communicate directly with interested parties, primarily through email or letters, in either Welsh or English as required.
 - **Social media:** Utilisation of CJC social media platforms, when appropriate, to share updates and information.

- **Engagement with Elected Members:** Conducting focused workshops, briefings, and drop-in sessions and reporting to relevant CJC meetings.
- **Press Releases:** Issuing press releases to local media as appropriate to reach a broader audience.
- **Informative Documents:** Creating easy-read versions or summary documents to facilitate understanding of key stages.
- **Public Information Exhibitions:** Organising public exhibitions, drop-in sessions, or virtual exhibitions.
- **Virtual Engagement and Consultation:** Using web-based technology such as webinars to engage and consult with stakeholders.

Providing Opportunities for Involvement

- 5.39 The CJC aims to offer numerous opportunities for stakeholders and interested parties to access information and participate in the SDP process. However, due to resource limitations, the extent of engagement must be balanced. Key considerations include:
- **Fair and Equal Treatment:** Ensuring that all consultees are treated fairly and equally.
 - **Resource Constraints:** Recognising the limits of available resources for engagement activities.
 - **Officer Availability:** Officers will not attend meetings organised by individual groups but will be available during normal office hours throughout the SDP process to provide information or assistance as needed.

SDP Consultee Database

- 5.40 An 'SDP Consultee Database' will be created to include members of the public, interested individuals, and any organizations who have requested to stay informed during each stage of the SDP process. The main goal of this database is to ensure those not on the Welsh Government's official list of consultees for SDP Plans are still involved and updated throughout the process. As of 25th May 2018, the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) mandates new restrictions on how organisations can store and use personal data, also defining individuals' rights regarding their data. The GDPR will apply to the SDP Consultee Database, and therefore, members of the public must provide written consent to be added to the SDP database.

Adding Details to the SDP Database

- 5.41 Anyone wishing to be added to the SDP database can do so by contacting the SDP Team either by email or in writing.

Assigning Representor Numbers

- 5.42 Each person (representor) added to the database will be assigned a unique representor number, which will remain the same throughout all stages of SDP preparation for consistency. This number will be used to reference any representations made during consultation stages.

Updating Contact Details

- 5.43 It is the responsibility of each representor to inform the SWWCJC if their contact details change during the SDP process. This is essential to keep all representors fully informed about the progress. Similarly, for Strategic Candidate Sites and Locations, any changes in land ownership must be communicated to the CJC to prevent any delays in the process.

Building Consensus

- 5.44 The CJC is committed to building consensus through various engagement and consultation methods as outlined in the CIS. Achieving consensus requires keeping the community and other interested parties fully informed and effectively engaged, particularly during the early stages of the SDP preparation. The CJC acknowledges that there will be times when consensus cannot be reached, leading to differences of opinion.
- 5.45 To ensure transparency in the decision-making process, the CJC will maintain a clear audit trail of all decisions. This will provide assurances to those who disagree, demonstrating that decisions are based on robust evidence. Furthermore, the CJC will carefully consider all supporting evidence provided by representors and stakeholders, alongside the SDP's evidence base, to support various viewpoints.
- 5.46 In summary, the CJC's approach to consensus building involves:
- Keeping all stakeholders fully informed and engaged from the outset.
 - Using a variety of engagement and consultation methods as per the CIS.
 - Maintaining transparency through a clear audit trail of decisions.
 - Considering all evidence and viewpoints thoroughly.
- 5.47 This approach ensures that even in the absence of unanimous agreement, the process remains fair, transparent, and evidence based.

Managing Representations

- 5.48 Representations received within the specified timescales will be handled as follows:
- Acknowledgement by e-mail (or letter where required) providing contact details and detailing how the CJC will deal with the representation.
 - Details of the next steps in the SDP preparation process.
 - Local Authority's responses to representations recorded and published in accordance with the SDP Regulations.
- 5.49 The CJC's website will be used to provide up-to-date information and news on the progress of the SDP. At all key stages, consultation responses will be reported to the CJC.
- 5.50 Petitions received during consultation periods on the SDP will be acknowledged and registered as a valid representation. Every petition must nominate a single presenter. An acknowledgment by email or letter will be sent to the presenter of the petition who will be the point of contact and will have a right to be heard at any future Examination, subject to agreement by the Inspector (PEDW). This does not limit the right of individuals signing the petition to submit separate formal representations on the SDP.

Late Representations

- 5.51 The SDP preparation process is subject to statutory and non- statutory consultation periods which have defined periods in which representations should be made. To ensure fairness and equality for all, any comments/representations received after the close of the prescribed consultation period will be deemed 'not duly made' and will not be considered further. The timescale to produce the SDP has been agreed by the Welsh Government and the acceptance of late representations could result in delays which would not be acceptable.
- 5.52 Only where the CJC is satisfied that a genuine attempt to submit a representation within the given timescales has been made, will a late representation be registered as duly made. Evidence of delivery, posting etc. will be required to support such claims. Such circumstances are expected to be exceptional, and all representors are advised to submit comments (representations) within the advertised consultation periods.

Availability of Documents

- 5.53 The SDP documents and representation forms will be made available electronically at the relevant stages of the preparation process on the CJC website at: [Corporate Joint Committee for South West Wales – Neath Port Talbot Council](#)
- 5.54 Reference copies will also be available at the following locations:
- CJC Principal Office: Civic Centre, Port Talbot, SA13 1PJ
 - Local Government Principal Offices (**Appendix 5**)
- 5.55 Where required, hard copies of documents will be sent to Specific Consultation bodies. However, paper copies of documents will not generally be sent out during the SDP process as they will be made publicly available in the locations listed above, as well as being made available electronically on the CJC's website. In exceptional circumstances paper copies may be offered. However, this will be assessed on a case-by-case basis depending on the specific needs of the relevant individual or stakeholder.
- 5.56 A summary of stakeholder involvement in the SDP key stages (Community Involvement Scheme (CIS) is attached as **Appendix 3**.

6. The Timetable

- 6.1 The timetable sets out a comprehensive schedule for the preparation of the SDP, providing clear timelines and milestones for key stages of the process. The timetable is structured into two main parts:

Definitive Stages:

- Covers all stages up to and including the statutory Deposit stage.
- The progress of the Strategic Development Plan (SDP) during these stages is under the direct control of the Corporate Joint Committee (CJC).
- The target dates for these stages are considered realistic and every effort will be made to adhere to them.

Indicative Stages:

- Covers the stages of plan preparation beyond the statutory Deposit stage.
- Progress in these stages depends on various external factors (e.g. number of representations received, number of examination hearing sessions, time taken to receive the Inspector's Report) over which the CJC has limited control.
- The dates for these stages are subject to reconsideration after reaching the Deposit stage. At that point, definitive timings for the remaining stages will be prepared and submitted to the Welsh Government for agreement and publication.

- 6.2 **Appendix 6** contains a detailed programme timetable that outlines the specific timeframe for each stage of plan preparation. It provides a breakdown of the tasks to be completed, from initial data collection to the final adoption of the Strategic Development Plan (SDP). Each milestone in the timetable is accompanied by clear deadlines and an estimated duration, ensuring transparency and accountability in the process. The appendix serves as a reference for stakeholders to track progress and align their involvement at key points.

- 6.3 Table 1: Summary of the SDP Timetable: The following table provides a summary of the key stages and milestones from the detailed timetable outlined in **Appendix 6**.



Key Stage			Timescales
Definitive			
Stage 1	Delivery Agreement Preparation and submission	SDP Regulations 7 to 12	Delivery Agreement to be submitted to Welsh Government for approval by March 2026.
Stage 2	Pre-Deposit Preparation and involvement	SDP Regulation 16 (1) – (a-d)	April 2026- December 2028
Stage 3	Preferred Strategy public consultation (6 weeks)	SDP Regulation 17 - 19	June-July 2028
Stage 4	Deposit Plan preparation & public consultation	SDP Regulations 20 - 22	December 2028- October 2029 (Public Consultation: November- December 2029)
Stage 5	Submission to PEDW & Welsh Government for E.I.P	SDP Regulation 23	December 2030
Indicative			
Stage 6	Examination	SDP Regulation 24	May 2031 – June 2031
Stage 7	Inspector's Report	SDP Regulation 25	October 2031 – November 2031
Stage 8	Adoption	SDP Regulation 35	December 2031

Risk Assessment

- 6.4 In line with the requirements of the SDP Manual, SDPs are to be completed within five years from the formal agreement of the DA. There is a provision for a single additional slippage period of three months, providing limited flexibility if necessary. Any deviation beyond this timeframe necessitates a formal revision to the DA, which should be considered only under exceptional circumstances. The CJC has identified specific risk areas that could lead to deviations from the timetable. These risks, along with proposed responses for managing them, are detailed in **Appendix 7**.

7. Programme Budget and Resourcing Strategy

- 7.1 To ensure the effective implementation of the SDP timetable, the CJC will allocate an appropriate level of budget and staff resources. This allocation will be reflected by incorporating the requirement to prepare an SDP into the revised Corporate Plan and the Medium-Term Financial Plan.

SDP Programme Budget

- 7.2 The table below outlines the anticipated costs associated with preparing the SDP, based on an assessment carried out by North Wales Planning Officers Group (NWPOG).
- 7.3 This cost estimation underscores the financial commitment necessary for delivering the SDP, with key expenditures primarily allocated to evidence base preparation and staffing. Effective management of the funding strategy and budgetary constraints will be crucial to ensuring successful plan delivery. While an exact cost cannot be determined at this stage, the budget range provided offers a reliable forecast. The final budget will ultimately depend on variable factors such as team size and the extent to which the evidence base is developed in-house versus commissioned from external consultants.

Primary Costs	Cost Estimation
Evidence base preparation	Circa £834,750
Examination in public	Circa £262,500
Consultation database	£31,500
Backoffice equipment and website	£66,150
Translating and printing	£110,250
Staff resources (core team)	£1,973,215
Total anticipated cost of preparing the SDP over a 5-year period	£3,278,365

Resourcing Strategy

- 7.4 The Corporate Joint Committee (CJC) will aim to recruit the right people with the right skills into the right roles at the right time. Establishing an independent regional team is essential to ensure sufficient staff resources are in place for the preparation and delivery of the SDP. That said there is also a limited pool of experienced planning professionals and the CJC

particularly wants to avoid recruiting staff from Local Planning Authorities within the region that may then leave respective Local Plan teams struggling for resources themselves.

7.5 The proposed core roles for the regional planning team are set out below:

- Chief Officer/Head of SDP Team
- Principal Regional Planner x1
- Senior Regional Planner x3
- Technical Support Officer x1

7.6 The ability to put in place the above team, or similar resources, within the CJC is dependent on having the financial resources to recruit such a team. Notwithstanding this structure, which was developed as part of the initial assessment of resource needs carried out by the NW planning officers, and mirrors those emerging in other CJs, the budget that has been set for the SDP by the CJC is insufficient to be able to create such a Team, and certainly not all at the same time. This does not mean that funding has not been allocated, but there is a clear funding gap which appears a common issue for the four CJs in Wales.

7.7 Funding for the development of the SDP will form part of the South West Wales Medium Term Financial Planning. It is important to note that, at this stage, that South West Wales CJC will endeavour to ensure a firm resource base is in place but funding of this is not yet identified or agreed.

7.8 The budget for the SDP will not be allocated until the start of the new financial year in April 2026. Consequently, the recruitment process for the SDP team will not be able to commence until April 2026, with an anticipated completion timeframe of September 2026.

7.9 Until a full funding solution can be identified, South West Wales CJC has been able to secure the support of a Regional Principal Policy Planner as a secondee from one of the South West Wales LPAs. This will allow initial work to progress on an SDP Delivery Agreement. This work will include:

- Preparation and delivery of the Delivery Agreement.

Future work will include:

- Reviewing the content and evidence bases of existing Local Development Plans (LDPs) and emerging LDPs in the region.
- Establishing baselines.
- Setting the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) framework.

- Conducting targeted consultations on the draft SA Scoping Report.
- Initiating the recruitment process for the SDP team.

Secondments

- 7.10 Throughout the SDP process, secondments may be used as a cost-effective means of acquiring specialised knowledge and skills while adding resilience to the core team. However, it is important to note that local authorities in the South West Wales may find it challenging to proceed with their own Local Development Plans (LDPs) if secondees are recruited from within their existing teams. To mitigate this potential issue, all secondments will be carefully planned to ensure minimal disruption to the ongoing LDP processes. **(secondments will only be considered where existing workload demands permit this arrangement).**

Shared Resources and Graduate Training Programme

- 7.11 In addition to the existing provisions, there is an opportunity to enhance collaboration and resource efficiency by sharing administrative and Geographic Information System (GIS) resources between the RTP and SDP teams.
- 7.12 Furthermore, the CJC propose the introduction of a structured graduate training programme. This initiative will serve multiple purposes:
- **Practical Experience:** Recent graduates will have the chance to gain hands-on experience in the fields of regional transport and land-use planning.
 - **Skill Development:** The programme will offer mentoring and training opportunities, allowing graduates to expand their skill sets.
 - **Succession Planning:** By investing in the professional growth of graduates, we will cultivate the next generation of regional transport and land-use planners, ensuring a sustainable and knowledgeable workforce for the future.
- 7.13 This integrated approach to resource sharing and workforce development aligns with our commitment to sustainable planning and the efficient use of resources.