

Dear Ms Davies

PLANNING (WALES) BILL 2014

Thank you for your letters to the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Planning, regarding the changes to the planning system in Wales. Cllrs Morgan and Bevan have asked that I reply to you direct.

The Bill clearly recognises the Welsh language as a material planning consideration in respect of planning applications. It is yet to be clarified as to whether the current position, as set out in Technical Advice Note 20 – Planning and the Welsh Language (October 2013) will be carried forward by Welsh Government. However, this will clearly become evident in due course as elements of the changes to the planning system are clarified.

The Council adopted the Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan (LDP) in March 2011 and provides the strategic framework for planning decisions in the County Borough up until 2021. We are currently at the four year review stage of the LDP but are currently discussing with Welsh Government about the extent of the review that needs to be undertaken.

At the time of preparation of the Council's LDP the original June 2000 version of TAN20 in force. Section 5 of that version clarifies the requirements for LPAs in preparing Unitary Development Plans. It is clear that LPAs were required to consider as part of a wider appraisal exercise the role and use of the Welsh language within its communities. Such a consideration did form part of the Council's sustainability appraisal which was considered and found to be sound by the Welsh Government appointed Inspector as part of the evidence base supporting the LDP.

In terms of the implications of s.11 (6A) of the Bill and whether TAN20 in its current form meets these requirements will be for Welsh Government to determine and clarify to all local planning authorities. The Council is keen to understand the position so that appropriate changes can be implemented.

Thank you for your interest in Rhondda Cynon Taf, and the Council's planning arrangements.

Yours sincerely

Jane

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