Cyd-bwyllgor Corfforedig De-Ddwyrain Cymru | South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee

STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT SUB-COMMITTEE

SUMMONS TO ATTEND A MEETING OF THE CORPORATE JOINT COMMITTEE	10 MARCH 2026
GWŶS I FYNYCHU CYFARFOD CYD IS-BWYLLGOR DATBLYGU STRATEGOL	10 MAWRTH 2026

You are summoned to attend a meeting of the **STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT SUB-COMMITTEE** which will be held via Microsoft Teams on Tuesday 10 March 2026 at 11.30am to transact the business set out in the agenda attached.

Jill Byron
Strategic Director Legal & Governance
Monitoring Officer

4 March 2026

TO: The Members of the Strategic Development Sub-Committee

Cllr Lis Burnett (Chair)	CJC Member
Cllr Andrew Morgan (Deputy Chair)	CJC Member
Cllr John Morgan	Blaenau Gwent CBC
Mr Steve Rayner	Brecon Beacons NPA
Cllr Neelo Farr	Bridgend CBC
Cllr Phillipa Leonard	Caerphilly CBC
Cllr Dan De'Ath	Cardiff Council
Cllr David Jones	Merthyr Tydfil CBC
Cllr Paul Griffiths	Monmouthshire CC
Cllr James Clarke	Newport CC
Cllr Mark Norris	Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC
Cllr Joanne Gauden	Torfaen CBC
Cllr Ruba Sivagnanam	Vale of Glamorgan Council

This document is available in Welsh / Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg

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Email: democraticservices@cardiffcapitalregion.gov.uk

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Cyd-bwyllgor Corfforedig De-Ddwyrain Cymru | South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee

Strategic Development Sub-Committee

9:30am on Monday 16 March 2026
Microsoft Teams

Agenda

PART 1

1. **Apologies for Absence**
   To receive apologies for absence.

2. **Declarations of Interests**
   To receive declarations of interest (such declarations to be made in accordance with the Members Code of Conduct).

3. **Strategic Development Plan – Visioning Workshop Report**
   Report of the Strategic Director of Policy, Impact and Partnerships

4. **Any Other Business**
   To receive any other business.

5. **Date of the Next Meeting**
   The next meeting will be in April 2026 – *date tbc.*

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Cyd-bwyllgor Corfforedig De-Ddwyrain Cymru | South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee

Report for:	ACTION
Contains Confidential or Exempt Information	NO

For Consideration By	Strategic Development Sub-Committee
Report Title	Strategic Development Plan – Visioning Workshop Report
Report of	Colan Mehaffey, Strategic Director Policy, Impact & Partnerships
Contact Details	colan.mehaffey@cardiffcapitalregion.gov.uk
Date to be Considered	10th March 2026
Implementation Date	Immediate
Affected Council Areas	All Wards
Keywords / Index	Strategic Development Plan, Visioning

1. Reasons for Report

1.1 This report summarises the outcomes of a non-statutory Visioning Workshop undertaken to inform the early preparation of the Cardiff Capital Region Strategic Development Plan (SDP). It does not establish policy, determine the spatial strategy, or prejudice future decisions. All matters will be subject to statutory plan-making requirements, formal consultation, sustainability appraisal and independent examination.

2. Recommendations

1.1 The Strategic Development Sub-Committee is asked to:

1) Note the Visioning Workshop Report and the synthesis of workshop outputs into key strategic issues and overarching core principles to guide early SDP preparation.
2) Adopt the report as a sound and proportionate initial framework to inform the development of the SDP Vision and Strategic Objectives.
3) Agree in principle to structure the emerging SDP Vision and Strategic Objectives around the ambitions of a Stronger, Fairer and Greener Region, aligning spatial planning priorities with the Cardiff Capital Region Economic Wellbeing Strategy, subject to statutory planning requirements and national policy conformity.

3. Report Summary

3.1 This report presents the outcomes of a Visioning Workshop convened to inform the early stages of SDP preparation for the Cardiff Capital Region. The workshop was independently facilitated by the Design Commission for Wales, whose expertise in placemaking and strategic thinking provided an impartial and constructive environment for discussion. Independent facilitation supported balanced participation across authorities, encouraged open dialogue and strengthened the credibility of the process.

3.2 Elected Members and senior officers from all ten constituent Local Planning Authorities participated to identify shared strengths, challenges and priorities, and to begin shaping a collective regional direction. Participants expressed strong support for the SDP as a unified statutory framework through which the Region can coordinate investment, align priorities and address cross-boundary planning issues that cannot be resolved at local level. Members emphasised the importance of long-term spatial planning grounded in sustainable development, integrated infrastructure provision and responsibility to future generations.

3.3 Discussions highlighted the Region's distinctive assets, including a compact capital city, interconnected valley communities, coastal towns, nationally significant landscapes, major higher education institutions and strategic transport corridors. Improved connectivity particularly through delivery of the South Wales Metro — was identified as a critical enabler of inclusive, sustainable and low-carbon growth and a key influence on future spatial development patterns.

3.4 Key strategic challenges identified include addressing economic and social inequalities; prioritising brownfield regeneration while enabling sustainable greenfield development where necessary; embedding net-zero principles; protecting natural assets; managing flood risk; improving physical and digital connectivity; and ensuring sufficient housing and employment land in sustainable locations.

3.5 Workshop outputs have been synthesised into a framework of strategic issues structured around the ambitions of a **Stronger, Fairer and Greener Region**, aligned with the Cardiff Capital Region Economic Wellbeing Strategy. This framework does not introduce new policy commitments and will be refined through evidence-led plan preparation, sustainability appraisal and further Member and stakeholder engagement, including the testing of alternative spatial development models.

3.6 The SDP will be prepared in accordance with statutory planning duties and in general conformity with Future Wales: The National Plan 2040. Alignment with regional economic and transport strategies will support coherent planning and investment decisions, while independent evidence and appraisal will guide the selection of a preferred spatial strategy.

3.7 Overall, the Visioning Workshop demonstrated strong regional commitment to developing an ambitious, coordinated and deliverable SDP. The outcomes

provide a robust foundation for progressing the SDP Vision, Strategic Objectives, evidence programme and spatial strategy development.

4. Background & Main Report

4.1 This section sets out the role of the SDP and the purpose of the Visioning Workshop in informing early plan preparation.

4.2 The SDP will provide the statutory spatial framework for the Cardiff Capital Region, guiding land-use, infrastructure investment and placemaking decisions on matters extending beyond individual local authority boundaries. It will form part of the statutory development plan for the Region and provide the principal basis for strategic cross-boundary planning decisions, while also supporting alignment of regional priorities, coordination of investment and delivery of shared outcomes.

4.3 The SDP will be prepared in general conformity with Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 and national planning policy. Future Wales identifies the Cardiff Capital Region as a nationally significant growth and connectivity corridor and establishes strategic priorities for housing, transport, energy, digital infrastructure and green infrastructure. The SDP will translate these national priorities into coordinated regional and local action through a place-based spatial strategy and delivery framework.

4.4 At the regional level, the SDP will align with the Cardiff Capital Region Economic Wellbeing Strategy and the emerging Regional Transport Plan to support coordination of spatial planning, economic development and infrastructure investment. This alignment will not constrain independent testing of alternative spatial strategies or statutory plan-making requirements.

4.5 The objectives of the Visioning Workshop were to identify regional strengths, articulate key challenges the SDP must address, agree shared priorities and highlight strategic issues the Plan will need to resolve to deliver a coherent, sustainable and inclusive future for the Region.

4.6 In progressing SDP preparation, officers will develop a proportionate evidence programme to understand functional relationships between places within the Region, including economic catchments, commuting patterns, service roles and investment flows. This will support future definition of settlement roles and the spatial distribution of growth and regeneration within a coherent regional framework.

4.7 Members and officers emphasised that the SDP should focus on matters that cannot be effectively addressed at local authority level, providing clear direction on spatial strategy, strategic priorities and the concentration of growth, regeneration and investment. Future Local Development Plans Lites will operate as streamlined, locally focused documents aligned with, and implementing, the strategic direction established through the SDP.

Spatial Trade-Offs for the Strategic Development Plan

4.8 The SDP will act as a coordinating framework integrating spatial planning with transport, economic development, infrastructure provision and environmental management. In doing so, Members will be required to consider significant strategic trade-offs that cannot be resolved through technical evidence alone and will require collective judgement.

4.9 Key trade-offs include:

- Concentrating growth in strategic locations versus distributing benefits more widely across the Region
- Prioritising brownfield regeneration while ensuring deliverability and viability
- Meeting housing and employment needs within environmental constraints
- Aligning development with major transport investment, particularly the South Wales Metro, while recognising existing settlement patterns
- Balancing economic competitiveness with the need to reduce regional inequalities
- Determining whether infrastructure should lead or follow development
- Reconciling short-term delivery pressures with long-term climate resilience and intergenerational wellbeing
- The SDP process will provide a transparent framework for testing these alternatives through evidence, sustainability appraisal and engagement, enabling informed decisions on a preferred spatial strategy.

Regional Challenges, Strengths and Overarching Messages

Regional Challenges

4.10 The Cardiff Capital Region faces interrelated structural challenges that the SDP must address. Long-standing economic and social inequalities persist across the Region, particularly within valley communities shaped by the legacy of heavy industry and deindustrialisation. This has left lower employment rates, poorer health outcomes, constrained town centres and ageing infrastructure, alongside fragmented settlement patterns and challenging topography that inhibit connectivity and investment.

4.11 These challenges are particularly pronounced within valley communities shaped by the legacy of heavy industry and post-industrial economic restructuring. While industrial decline has affected the wider Region, its impacts remain most acute in many valley settlements, where constrained topography, fragmented settlement patterns, ageing infrastructure and limited employment opportunities continue to restrict economic diversification and investment. Addressing the long-term consequences of deindustrialisation will therefore be central to delivering inclusive regional growth.

4.12 Rural communities across the Region face distinct but related pressures, including limited access to services, public transport constraints, digital connectivity gaps, ageing populations and affordability challenges. The SDP will need to recognise that a “one-size-fits-all” approach to spatial planning

would not adequately address the needs of dispersed settlements and rural economies.

4.13 In addition, part of the Region falls within the Bannau Brycheiniog (Brecon Beacons) National Park, a nationally protected landscape with statutory purposes to conserve and enhance natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage while fostering the social and economic wellbeing of local communities. Cross-boundary coordination with the National Park Authority will be essential to ensure that development pressures, infrastructure provision, housing needs and tourism are managed in a way that respects environmental limits while supporting sustainable communities.

4.14 These factors require the SDP to adopt a spatial strategy capable of responding to varied local circumstances across urban, valley, rural and nationally protected areas, ensuring that growth, regeneration and opportunity are distributed in a balanced and sustainable manner across the Region.

4.15 While Cardiff functions as the Region's principal economic anchor, weaker linkages between other communities and opportunity continue to constrain inclusive growth, reinforcing disparities between urban, coastal and valley areas. Pressure to accommodate housing and economic growth must be balanced against finite land resources, landscape sensitivity and the need to prioritise brownfield regeneration. Climate change introduces further risk through increased flooding and the requirement to embed net zero principles into land-use and infrastructure decisions.

4.16 These conditions require the SDP to coordinate regeneration, transport investment and spatial growth choices at a regional scale where local plans cannot act alone.

Regional Strengths

4.17 Members identified the Region's distinctive physical, economic and cultural assets as a strong foundation for future prosperity. The diverse settlement pattern — from the compact capital city of Cardiff to connected valley communities, key urban areas and coastal settlements — supports local identity, services, tourism and recreation, offering high-quality natural environments alongside urban economic opportunity.

4.18 Members emphasised that success depends on these places working together as a connected system, with complementary roles rather than competition for growth and investment. The concentration of universities, research institutions, a large student population and established innovation networks was recognised as a key driver of regional economic potential.

4.19 Strengthened transport connectivity, particularly through delivery of the South Wales Metro, was identified as a critical enabler of balanced and resilient regional growth. The SDP will provide the spatial planning framework to maximise the benefits of this investment by directing growth, regeneration and infrastructure to locations best served by the Metro network. Together, the SDP, Regional Transport Plan and South Wales Metro will operate as complementary programmes, aligning land-use planning and transport

investment to deliver more connected, inclusive and low-carbon regional growth. The Region's identity is also shaped by its valley landscapes, rural hinterlands and nationally significant protected environments, including the Bannau Brycheiniog National Park. These areas contribute substantially to environmental quality, cultural heritage, tourism and quality of life, while also presenting distinct planning challenges. A successful SDP will need to support these places in ways that enhance resilience, improve connectivity and sustain local communities without undermining the environmental assets that define their character and long-term value.

4.20 Collectively, these assets provide a strong platform for reinforcing regional identity, attracting investment and talent, and delivering shared prosperity.

Strengthening the Cardiff Capital Region Identity

4.21 The Cardiff Capital Region's distinctiveness lies in the close interdependence of a national capital, a second city, strong town centres, historic valley communities, rural areas and coastal settlements within a compact geography, creating the conditions for a polycentric pattern of growth anchored by the capital city**,** rather than a single-centre dominated model**.**

4.22 The South Wales Metro is the key enabling infrastructure in this system, reshaping functional relationships between places by improving access to employment, education and services across the Region, strengthening regional resilience and shared prosperity.

4.23 This combination of settlement patterns, economic assets and high-quality landscapes within a compact travel-to-work area is distinctive in both the Welsh and wider UK context. It creates a unique set of regeneration, placemaking and connectivity opportunities — including addressing digital and physical accessibility in rural areas for the SDP to respond to.

4.24 The Region's identity is also shaped by its valley landscapes, rural hinterlands and nationally significant protected environments, including the Bannau Brycheiniog National Park. These areas contribute substantially to environmental quality, cultural heritage, tourism and quality of life, while also presenting distinct planning challenges. A successful SDP will need to support these places in ways that enhance resilience, improve connectivity and sustain local communities without undermining the environmental assets that define their character and long-term value.

4.25 The SDP therefore has a unique role in shaping a Region that is globally connected through its urban centres, locally anchored through its communities, and future-focused through innovation and low-carbon transition.

4.26 The SDP will test a range of alternative spatial development models through its statutory evidence and appraisal processes before defining a preferred spatial strategy.

Overarching Messages from Members

4.27 Members expressed strong support for the SDP as a unified regional framework for addressing cross-boundary challenges and coordinating investment. Key messages included:

- The need for a clear long-term vision to guide spatial planning and infrastructure decisions
- Commitment to sustainable development as a foundational principle
- Recognition of the Region's diversity as a major strength
- Support for collaborative rather than competitive growth between authorities
- The importance of integrating land-use planning with transport, economic development and environmental stewardship

4.28 Future stages of the SDP will define complementary roles for different places within the Region, avoiding competition for investment and promoting mutually reinforcing development patterns.

Key Strategic Issues for the SDP

4.29 The framework below reflects officer synthesis of workshop outputs. It translates the themes and messages expressed by Members and officers into a structured basis for progressing SDP preparation.

4.30 **A Stronger Region**

Key Issue	Strategic Focus	Why This Matters for the SDP
Shared Regional Identity	Define a clear and confident identity for the Cardiff Capital Region; build pride across urban, valley, rural and coastal communities; establish a collective voice for ten LPAs; and position the Region as a distinctive place to live, work, visit and invest. This includes developing a forward-looking narrative that promotes the Region as a place of innovation, liveability and opportunity, supporting investor confidence, talent attraction and population retention.	A strong regional identity is the foundation for genuine collaboration and shared purpose. It binds diverse places into a single functional Region, strengthens investor confidence, aligns local priorities behind common ambitions, and ensures the SDP is viewed as a transformative strategy rather than a technical requirement. In developing this shared identity, it will be important to reflect and celebrate the distinct local character, history and sense of place across the Region's cities, towns, valleys, rural and coastal communities. The Vision should capture the Region's diversity, quality of life, pride in place, cultural richness and liveability, ensuring that local identity is reinforced within a shared regional framework.

Economic Sustainability and Growth	Align spatial planning with the CCR Economic Wellbeing Strategy; support innovation, skills and enterprise; grow high-value sectors; strengthen town and city centres; attract investment; and shift from zero-sum competition to collaborative regional growth. Future SDP evidence work will identify spatial requirements for priority growth sectors, innovation activity and emerging industries, aligning employment land provision with universities, skills pipelines and research assets.	The SDP must provide the spatial framework to deliver sustainable and inclusive economic growth. Directing development and infrastructure investment to strategic locations will enable regeneration, reduce disparities between communities, and embed shared prosperity as a defining regional principle.
Connectivity – People and Places	Integrate land-use planning with the Regional Transport Plan; improve public transport, active travel and digital connectivity; link communities to jobs and services; and remove barriers between urban, valley and rural areas. The SDP will examine how improved transport connectivity — particularly through the South Wales Metro — can reshape labour market accessibility, enabling people to reach emerging employment opportunities efficiently and sustainably across the Region.	Connectivity unlocks opportunity. Aligning the SDP with the RTP ensures land-use and transport planning operate as a single system — prioritising infrastructure investment, enabling modal shift, widening access to employment, and creating a more mobile, connected and competitive Region.
Efficient Use of Land	Prioritise brownfield regeneration; promote compact, mixed-use and transit-oriented development; optimise densities in sustainable locations; and align land-use with infrastructure capacity and placemaking principles.	Land is a finite regional asset. Using it efficiently reduces carbon emissions, protects landscapes, maximises infrastructure investment, and delivers high-quality, walkable communities.
Balanced Greenfield Development	Recognise the role of strategic greenfield sites where necessary to meet housing and employment needs; direct development only to sustainable locations; and secure high environmental and design standards.	A balanced approach maintains delivery viability while avoiding unsustainable sprawl. Carefully planned greenfield development can enable comprehensive infrastructure and integrated transport solutions where brownfield regeneration alone cannot meet need.

Bringing the Region Together	Strengthen collaboration between LPAs; align priorities and investment; and deliver collective solutions to shared cross-boundary challenges.	A unified regional approach avoids duplication, improves efficiency, and ensures strategic issues are addressed coherently and at the right scale.
Vision and Leadership	Establish a clear, aspirational and deliverable vision that restores optimism, focuses on future generations, and drives action.	A compelling vision provides direction, builds confidence and ensures the SDP becomes a catalyst for transformation rather than a statutory exercise.

4.31 **A Fairer Region**

Key Issue	Strategic Focus	Why This Matters for the SDP
Addressing Economic and Social Inequalities	Embed shared prosperity; target regeneration and investment to disadvantaged communities; and widen access to jobs, services and opportunity. Particular attention will be required for communities affected by long-term industrial decline, rural isolation or limited accessibility to employment and services. There was strong support for the SDP contributing directly to improved wellbeing and social outcomes for residents across the Region, not solely the delivery of housing numbers or economic growth metrics. The Plan should therefore embed wellbeing considerations within spatial choices, regeneration priorities and infrastructure investment decisions.	Reducing inequalities is central to inclusive growth. The SDP must ensure spatial planning redistributes opportunity fairly and delivers tangible benefits to communities that need them most.
Sustainable Housing Growth	Plan for sufficient, high-quality and affordable homes; direct housing to sustainable locations; align delivery with infrastructure; and promote mixed, walkable and inclusive communities.	Housing delivery underpins economic resilience, talent retention and community wellbeing. The SDP provides the framework to deliver homes in the right places, supported by transport and services.
Talent and Demographic Resilience	Create conditions to attract and retain young and skilled residents; align housing, connectivity and placemaking to improve regional attractiveness; and support priority	Without action, demographic imbalance will undermine future prosperity. The SDP must help make the Region a

	growth sectors. This will be informed by evidence on demographic trends, graduate retention, inward migration potential and regional competitiveness.	place where talent stays, businesses invest and communities thrive.

4.32 **A Greener Region**

Key Issue	Strategic Focus	Why This Matters for the SDP
Net Zero Transition	Embed decarbonisation across spatial planning; support renewable energy and low-carbon infrastructure; promote energy-efficient buildings; and reduce transport emissions through integrated planning.	The SDP provides the spatial framework to translate net zero commitments into place-based action and position the Region as a leader in the low-carbon transition.
Landscape Protection and Capitalisation	Protect and enhance landscapes from mountains to coast; strengthen ecological and cultural assets; and harness landscape as a driver of wellbeing, tourism and sustainable economic opportunity.	Landscapes define regional identity and support biodiversity, health and tourism. The SDP must safeguard valued environments while embedding landscape-led placemaking.
Green Infrastructure	Create a connected regional green infrastructure network; embed nature into towns and new development; support biodiversity recovery; and expand access to open space and active travel routes.	Green infrastructure underpins resilient, healthy and attractive places. Integrating it into spatial planning enhances climate adaptation and wellbeing.
Flooding and Catchment Management	Adopt a catchment-based approach to flood risk; align planning with natural water systems; avoid inappropriate development in risk areas; and promote nature-based solutions.	Climate change intensifies flood risk. The SDP enables region-wide coordination to safeguard communities and infrastructure investment.
Natural Resources Wales Alignment	Integrate NRW Area Statements and evidence into regional planning and environmental decision-making.	Aligning with NRW evidence ensures environmental policy is robust, consistent and strengthens the legal resilience of the SDP.

Overarching Core Principles

4.33 Members and officers identified a set of principles to guide plan preparation and delivery. These include:

- Sustainable development as the central organising principle
- Collaborative regional governance and leadership

- Evidence-led and outcome-focused planning
- Integration of land-use planning with transport and infrastructure investment
- A long-term perspective that considers intergenerational impacts
- Flexibility to respond to changing circumstances while maintaining strategic clarity

4.34 Officers have confirmed that these principles align with national expectations set out in emerging SDP guidance.

Aligning the SDP with the Economic Wellbeing Strategy

4.35 The SDP Vision and Strategic Objectives will be structured to align with the Cardiff Capital Region Economic Wellbeing Strategy. This will support coherence between spatial planning, economic development, transport, infrastructure and environmental policy, ensuring priorities and investment decisions are mutually reinforcing.

4.36 This alignment will be undertaken alongside statutory planning requirements and national policy conformity. Alternative spatial development models will be tested through independent evidence, sustainability appraisal and Member engagement before a preferred strategy is selected, ensuring planning integrity and transparency.

Conclusion

4.37 The Visioning Workshop demonstrated strong regional commitment to preparing an ambitious and unified Strategic Development Plan. The discussions summarised in this report provide a coherent foundation for developing the SDP Vision, Strategic Objectives, evidence programme and spatial strategy.

4.38 Further Member and stakeholder engagement will explore alternative spatial development models and strategic options as evidence emerges, ensuring that future SDP direction is robust, transparent and collectively owned.

4.39 The workshop also highlighted the value of learning from established regional planning practice elsewhere in the UK and Europe, where strategic spatial planning has supported cohesive city-region development. This learning will inform refinement of the SDP Vision and strategic approach as plan preparation progresses.

5. Comments of the Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer

5.1 The CJC's approved budget for 2026/27 includes £0.5m for the preparation of the Cardiff Capital Region Strategic Development Plan (SDP).

5.2 This report summarises the outcomes of a non-statutory Visioning Workshop undertaken to inform the early preparation of the SDP.

5.3 Workshop outputs have been synthesised into a framework of strategic issues structured around the ambitions of a Stronger, Fairer and Greener

Region, aligned with the Cardiff Capital Region Economic Wellbeing Strategy.

5.4 This framework does not introduce new policy commitments (determine the spatial strategy, or prejudice future decisions), and as such does not introduce additional financial pressures to the CJC.

6. Comments of the Director of Legal & Governance and Monitoring Officer

6.1 Under regulation 13 of the South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee Regulations 2021, the CJC is responsible for preparing a strategic development plan under Part 6 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The recommendations set out in this report support that objective.

7. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

7.1 The Corporate Joint Committee is subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty and the Socio Economic Duty as defined by the Equality Act 2010.

7.2 The Committee must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to: (1) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited under the Act; (2) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not; and (3) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not.

7.3 The characteristics protected under the Act are:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex; and
- sexual orientation

7.4 Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:

(a) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
(b) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
(c) encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

7.5 The socio-economic duty requires public bodies to, when making decisions of a strategic nature about how to exercise its functions, have due regard to the

desirability of exercising them in a way that is designed to reduce the inequalities of outcome which result from socio-economic disadvantage.

7.6 Officers are of the view that the decisions recommended in this report will have a positive equalities impact.

7.7 An Equalities Impact Assessment appears at Appendix 1 to this report.

8. Well-being of Future Generations

8.1 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 places a duty on public bodies to carry out sustainable development, meaning the process of improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action aimed at achieving the well-being goals of:

- 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

and by acting in a way which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

8.2 In order to act in accordance with the sustainable development principle, when exercising its functions, the Committee must take account of the following things:

- the importance of balancing short term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to meet long term needs;
- the need to take an integrated approach to achieving the well-being goals;
- the importance of involving others with an interest in achieving the well-being goals and of ensuring those persons reflect the diversity of the population of the region;
- how acting in collaboration with others could assist to meet the region's well-being objectives;
- how deploying resources to prevent problems occurring or getting worse may contribute to meeting the region's well-being objectives.

8.3 In developing the Recommendations of this report, regard has been had to the well-being duty arising under the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 ('the Act').

8.4 A Well-being of Future Generations Assessment appears at Appendix 2 to this report.

9. Welsh Language Implications

9.1 In accordance with the Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015, consideration has been given to the impact the recommendations made in this report may have on opportunities for people to use and promote the Welsh Language, whether the proposals treat the Welsh Language more or less favourably than the English Language, and opportunities for increasing the positive effects, or decreasing the negative effects, of the proposals on the Welsh Language.

9.2 No negative impacts were identified which would prevent approval being sought to implement the recommendations of this report.

10 Risk Management

10.1 Risks are manageable with effective governance arrangements in place. Establishing the SDSC reduces strategic, legal, and reputational risks associated with SDP delivery and improves resilience, accountability, and compliance. Risk levels will be reviewed periodically by the SDSC to ensure continued compliance and effectiveness as the SDP progresses through statutory stages.

11 Links to CCR Priorities

11.1 This report supports the outcomes set out in CCR's Regional Economic and Industrial Plan (2023–2028) by establishing an initial strategic framework to guide preparation of the Strategic Development Plan (SDP), which will align spatial planning with regional economic, transport and infrastructure priorities:

- **COMPETITIVE** — By providing the foundations for a coordinated spatial strategy that supports sustainable economic growth, innovation, investment and the development of priority sectors across the Region.
- **CONNECTED** — By emphasising the importance of integrated land-use planning with digital and physical infrastructure, particularly public transport connectivity and the transition to a low-carbon economy.
- **RESILIENT** — By promoting a Stronger, Fairer and Greener Region, including addressing regional inequalities, supporting regeneration, protecting environmental assets and ensuring that growth and opportunity are shared across all communities.

11.2 This report represents an early stage in the SDP process and does not establish policy but sets the strategic context for future decisions that will contribute to these regional priorities.

12 Staffing/Workforce Implications

12.1 No changes to existing staffing structures arise from this decision. The governance transition supports clearer lines of responsibility, accountability, and coordination, reducing operational risk and improving clarity for officers working on the SDP.

13 Any Other Implications

13.1 There are no direct legal, financial, or environmental implications arising from this report beyond those already addressed.

14 Consultation

14.1 This report has been prepared in consultation with the SEWCJC Monitoring Officer.

15 Timetable for Implementation

15.1 Officers will present a draft Vision in April for discussion with Members and officers.

16 References and Evidence Base

16.1 This report is informed primarily by qualitative outputs from the Strategic Development Plan Visioning Workshop facilitated by the Design Commission for Wales. As a non-statutory document, it does not rely on a comprehensive technical evidence base at this stage but reflects Member and officer perspectives on key strategic issues facing the Region.

16.2 The emerging SDP will be supported by a robust programme of evidence gathering, appraisal and consultation in accordance with statutory plan-making requirements. This will include Sustainability Appraisal / Integrated Sustainability Appraisal, technical studies, demographic and economic analysis, environmental assessments and stakeholder engagement.

16.3 Relevant policy and evidence sources informing the context for this report include:

- Future Wales: The National Plan 2040
- Planning Policy Wales (latest edition)
- Cardiff Capital Region Economic Wellbeing Strategy
- Emerging Regional Transport Plan
- South Wales Metro Programme documentation
- Natural Resources Wales Area Statement
- Outputs of the Design Commission for Wales facilitated Visioning Workshop

17 Appendices

Appendix 1: Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) — Strategic Development Plan: Visioning Workshop Report (10 March 2026)
Appendix 2: Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 Assessment

Report Author: Richard Matthams – Head of Strategic Development

Date of Meeting: 10th March 2026

Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) — Strategic Development Plan: Visioning Workshop Report (10 March 2026)

This EqIA is proportionate to the nature of the report, which summarises a non-statutory visioning workshop and seeks agreement to note the outputs and to use them as an initial framework for developing the SDP Vision and Strategic Objectives. It does not set policy, determine a spatial strategy, or allocate sites.

1. Proposal summary

The report summarises member/officer discussions facilitated by Design Commission for Wales and synthesises outputs into a framework of strategic issues and core principles to guide early SDP preparation. Recommendations are to note the report and agree an initial organising framework (Stronger, Fairer, Greener) aligned with the CCR Economic Wellbeing Strategy, subject to statutory requirements and national policy conformity.

2. Evidence and engagement used

At this stage, the primary "evidence" is qualitative workshop output from elected Members and senior officers across the ten LPAs. Independent facilitation supported balanced participation and open dialogue. Further statutory evidence, Sustainability Appraisal and formal consultation will follow and will provide the appropriate mechanisms to assess differential impacts of spatial options and draft policies.

3. Who may be affected

Potential impacts relate to how the early framing influences subsequent plan-making priorities, engagement design and evidence work. Indirect effects could arise for:
People sharing protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership.

People experiencing socio-economic disadvantage (Socio-economic Duty), including low-income households, communities with poor access to jobs/services, those facing digital exclusion, and areas affected by long-term structural inequalities (noted in the report particularly in valley communities).

4. Assessment of likely impacts by protected characteristic

Given the report's non-statutory and non-policy nature, direct impacts are limited. Likely impacts are primarily procedural (how the SDP process is shaped) and therefore relate to inclusion in future engagement and evidence gathering.

Age: Potential positive impact. The report signals long-term planning and "future generations" framing, which supports intergenerational equity. Risk exists if future engagement methods are not tailored for younger people and older residents (digital-only engagement).

Disability: Potential positive impact if future engagement and evidence explicitly consider accessibility, inclusive transport, and accessible public realm in line with “connectivity” and “fairer region” themes. Risk if engagement venues/materials are not accessible or if policy work does not embed inclusive design early.

Gender reassignment: Neutral at this stage. Potential to embed safe, inclusive place principles later. Risk if future engagement does not create welcoming and safe participation spaces.

Pregnancy and maternity: Neutral at this stage; potential positive later if SDP priorities strengthen access to services, walkability, green space and public transport reliability. Risk if engagement arrangements (timing/locations) are not family-friendly.

Race: Potential positive impact where future SDP work addresses inequalities and access to jobs/services; however, risk that minority ethnic communities are under-represented in engagement if standard consultation channels are relied upon.

Religion or belief: Neutral at this stage; potential positive later if community infrastructure planning reflects diverse needs. Risk if engagement does not reach faith/community networks.

Sex: Neutral at this stage; potential positive later through safer street design, public transport safety and access to employment. Risk if safety and gendered travel patterns are not considered in evidence and appraisal.

Sexual orientation: Neutral at this stage; potential positive later through inclusive placemaking and safer public realm. Risk relates mainly to ensuring inclusive engagement.
Marriage and civil partnership: Neutral at this stage.

Overall conclusion on protected characteristics: No adverse impacts are anticipated from the act of noting the report and using it as an initial framework, provided that subsequent SDP stages explicitly incorporate equality considerations in evidence, appraisal and engagement.

5. Socio-economic Duty assessment (inequalities of outcome)

Potential positive impact. The report explicitly identifies persistent economic and social inequalities and frames a “Fairer Region” ambition, including targeting regeneration and widening access to opportunity. This framing should support later plan choices designed to reduce inequalities of outcome, particularly through spatial targeting of investment, housing in sustainable locations, and improved connectivity.

Potential risks:
If later spatial options over-emphasise already-strong areas without adequate redistribution mechanisms, inequalities could widen.

If engagement is not designed to reach deprived communities, the SDP may not fully reflect lived experience and barriers (including cost of travel, caring responsibilities, digital exclusion).

6. Cumulative impacts and interdependencies

The report emphasises integration of land-use planning with the Regional Transport Plan and Metro delivery as an enabler of opportunity. There is potential for cumulative positive effects where future SDP work aligns housing, employment land, and transport accessibility, particularly benefiting groups with lower car access (often correlated with lower incomes, some disabled residents, some older/younger people).

7. Mitigation and enhancement actions

Proportionate actions at this stage relate to shaping the next stages of SDP preparation:

Engagement and involvement
Commit to inclusive engagement planning for the SDP Vision/Objectives and spatial options, including accessible venues, British Sign Language/interpretation as needed, easy-read materials, and non-digital options.
Targeted engagement with under-represented groups and communities, using trusted intermediaries (community groups, youth forums, disability organisations, faith/community networks).
Timing and format choices to support participation by carers and working people (evenings/weekends where appropriate).

Evidence and appraisal
Ensure the evidence programme includes equality-relevant datasets (accessibility to services, deprivation, health, disability prevalence, car ownership, digital connectivity, housing affordability).

Build equality prompts into option testing (e.g., distributional impacts by deprivation quintile; accessibility impacts for non-car households; safety and inclusion considerations).
Ensure Sustainability Appraisal/Integrated Sustainability Appraisal includes clear equality and socio-economic criteria and that findings inform the preferred strategy.

Governance
Maintain transparent reporting back to Members on how engagement feedback (including from protected groups) has shaped emerging Vision/Objectives and spatial options.
Continue independent facilitation where useful to support balanced participation.

8. Monitoring and review

Given this report is an early-stage framework, monitoring should be embedded in the SDP programme rather than this specific committee item. Proposed monitoring approach:
Track participation and representation in SDP engagement by geography and equality-related proxies (where appropriate and lawful).

Publish summary engagement outcomes and “you said / we did” reporting to demonstrate how views influenced the emerging SDP.

At each key SDP stage (Vision/Objectives, spatial options, preferred strategy, draft plan), include an updated EqIA statement drawing on the evolving evidence base and SA findings.

9. Overall EqIA conclusion

The recommendations in the Visioning Workshop Report are likely to have a positive equalities impact overall, primarily by setting a direction that explicitly recognises inequalities and the need to widen access to opportunity through integrated spatial planning. No negative equalities impacts are anticipated from agreeing the report as an initial framework, noting that full assessment of differential impacts will be undertaken through the statutory SDP plan-making process, including Sustainability Appraisal/Integrated Sustainability Appraisal, formal consultation and examination.

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

This assessment is proportionate to the nature of the report, which summarises a non-statutory visioning exercise and seeks agreement to note its outputs as an initial framework for developing the Strategic Development Plan (SDP) Vision and Strategic Objectives. The report does not set policy, allocate development, or determine the spatial strategy.

1. Summary of the proposal

The report presents the outcomes of a region-wide Visioning Workshop involving elected Members and senior officers from the ten constituent Local Planning Authorities. The workshop explored shared strengths, challenges and priorities to inform early SDP preparation.

The recommendations seek agreement to use these outputs as a foundation for developing the SDP Vision and Strategic Objectives structured around a **Stronger, Fairer and Greener Region**, aligned with the Cardiff Capital Region Economic Wellbeing Strategy and subject to statutory planning processes.

As the SDP will provide the statutory spatial framework guiding land use, infrastructure investment and placemaking across the Region, the early direction set by this report has potential long-term implications for regional well-being.

2. Contribution to the Seven Well-being Goals

A Prosperous Wales

Positive contribution

The report emphasises coordinated economic growth, innovation, skills development and improved connectivity, including maximising the benefits of the South Wales Metro. These priorities support sustainable economic development, productivity and long-term prosperity across the Region.

The SDP is intended to align spatial planning with economic strategies to direct investment to appropriate locations and strengthen regional competitiveness.

A Resilient Wales

Positive contribution

Environmental priorities identified in the workshop include:

- Net-zero transition
- Protection of natural assets
- Green infrastructure
- Flood risk management
- Landscape protection

These themes support biodiversity, climate resilience and sustainable resource use. The report recognises the need to balance growth with environmental constraints and long-term climate risks.

A Healthier Wales

Positive contribution

While health policy is not the primary focus, the report highlights elements that contribute to healthier communities, including:

- Access to services and employment
- Active travel and public transport
- Green infrastructure and open space
- Reduced inequalities

Improved connectivity and environmental quality can support physical and mental wellbeing outcomes across the Region.

A More Equal Wales

Strong positive contribution

Reducing economic and social inequalities is identified as a central challenge for the Region, particularly in communities affected by industrial decline. The “Fairer Region” framework emphasises widening access to jobs, services and opportunity and directing regeneration to disadvantaged areas.

As the SDP progresses, these priorities provide a basis for addressing structural inequalities through spatial planning decisions.

A Wales of Cohesive Communities

Strong positive contribution

The report emphasises:

- Strengthening connectivity between places
- Coordinated infrastructure investment
- Regeneration of towns and communities
- Collaboration across local authorities
- Complementary roles for settlements

These elements support safe, viable and well-connected communities with improved access to services and opportunities.

A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language

Positive contribution

The report recognises the Region's cultural assets, identity and heritage as strengths that should be reflected in the SDP Vision. Protecting local character and sense of place can support cultural wellbeing and community pride.

While the Welsh language is not explicitly discussed in detail, future SDP stages will need to assess impacts in accordance with statutory requirements.

A Globally Responsible Wales

Positive contribution

Commitments to decarbonisation, sustainable development, environmental protection and low-carbon growth support Wales' global responsibilities in addressing climate change and sustainable resource use.

The emphasis on integrated planning and long-term resilience aligns with global sustainability principles.

3. Application of the Sustainable Development Principle

(The Five Ways of Working)

Long Term

The report explicitly emphasises long-term spatial planning, intergenerational responsibility and climate resilience. The SDP will shape development patterns for decades, supporting sustainable outcomes for future generations.

Prevention

By addressing structural inequalities, infrastructure needs, climate risks and land constraints early, the SDP process aims to prevent future problems such as unsustainable development, congestion, environmental degradation and social disparities.

Integration

The report promotes integrated planning across land use, transport, economic development, infrastructure and environmental management. Alignment with regional strategies supports coherent decision-making across sectors.

Collaboration

The workshop brought together Members and officers from all constituent authorities, supported by independent facilitation. The SDP itself is intended as a collaborative regional framework for addressing cross-boundary issues.

Involvement

This stage involved elected representatives and senior officers. Future SDP preparation will include wider stakeholder and public engagement through statutory consultation processes, ensuring broader involvement reflecting the diversity of the Region.

4. Overall Impact Assessment

Given the non-statutory nature of the report, direct impacts are limited. However, the direction it sets for SDP preparation is likely to have **significant long-term positive implications** for well-being across the Region.

Key anticipated benefits include:

- Coordinated and sustainable economic growth
- Reduction of regional inequalities
- Improved connectivity and access to opportunity
- Climate resilience and environmental protection
- Stronger, more cohesive communities

No negative impacts have been identified at this stage.

5. Monitoring and Future Review

As the SDP progresses, further assessments will be required at key stages, including:

- Vision and Strategic Objectives
- Spatial options
- Preferred strategy
- Draft Plan

These stages will involve detailed evidence, Sustainability Appraisal / Integrated Sustainability Appraisal, statutory consultation and examination to ensure compliance with the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

6. Conclusion

The recommendations in the Visioning Workshop Report are consistent with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and are likely to make a positive contribution to all seven well-being goals.

The report establishes an early framework for a Strategic Development Plan intended to deliver sustainable, inclusive and resilient growth across the Cardiff Capital Region. Full assessment of impacts will be undertaken through subsequent statutory stages of plan preparation.