

FULL COUNCIL REPORT

Date Written	11 th February 2015
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Service Area	Town Planning/ Housing
Exempt/Non Exempt	Non-exempt
Committee Date	25 th February 2015

To: Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen

Merthyr Tydfil Local Housing Market Assessment 2015

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT:

To seek Council's approval to publish the Merthyr Tydfil Local Housing Market Assessment (LHMA) 2015 to form part of the Local Development Plan/ Local Housing Strategy evidence base, and to assist in negotiating affordable housing on new housing developments.

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Technical Advice Note (TAN) 2 (2006), which is national planning policy, requires all Welsh Local Authorities to formulate LHMA's to provide a robust evidence base for both local housing strategies and development plans. The Housing (Wales) Act 2014 also requires local authorities to internally produce an updated LHMA by April 2015 and update the assessment every two years.
- 1.2 Previously, the LHMA's produced in Merthyr Tydfil have been carried out by external consultants. In accordance with the requirements of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014, the latest version has been produced in-house resulting in a financial saving in production costs and the Council having more control over the content of the report. A summary of the 2015 LHMA is attached as Appendix 1 to this report. A hard copy of the full report is available in the Members' library.

2.0 MERTHYR TYDFIL LHMA 2015

- 2.1 This Local Housing Market Assessment has applied the Welsh Government's approved methodology to assess the housing market in Merthyr Tydfil from 2014-2019.
- 2.2 A range of information sources were utilised to feed into the assessment. These included an analysis of the local housing registers, household projections, homelessness data, house prices, rental prices, household incomes, dwelling stock turnover and housing supply data. Household sizes were found to be smaller than previous assessments across all markets, with an acute need for one and two bedroom properties. There is also a disparity in demand to live in specific areas across Merthyr Tydfil, with the Town, Penydarren, Cyfarthfa and Dowlais Wards proving most popular.
- 2.3 Whilst assessing the local housing market as a whole, the assessment specifically estimated the deficit of affordable housing within the County Borough. Overall, there is a net need for 366 additional affordable housing units **per annum** comprising:
- 338 general needs social rented units
 - 17 general needs low cost home ownership units
 - 11 intermediate rent units
- 2.4 It is important to emphasise that these figures are not annual delivery targets or even the solution to the affordability issues within the County Borough. They are instead an indication of the scale of the affordable housing need and a benchmark to which the Council will work towards as far as practically deliverable through a range of methods. Additionally, it is important to emphasise that these headline figures distort differences in sub market areas, tenures and property types required.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

- 3.1 The production of the LHMA in-house has resulted in a saving of approximately £13,000 in comparison to the previous assessment which was carried out by a consultant.

4.0 SINGLE INTEGRATED PLAN AND SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT SUMMARY

- 4.1 The Single Integrated Plan and Sustainability Impact Assessment has been completed and the proposals positively impact on a number of aspects of the Single Integrated Plan, in particular Priority 4 - people enjoy a vibrant, attractive, safe and sustainable place in which to live, work, play and visit. An up to date LHMA also assists in enabling people to access better quality, more suitable housing in appropriate locations across the County Borough. No negative impacts have been identified.

5.0 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) screening form has been prepared for the purpose of this report. It has been found that a full report is not required at this time. The screening form can be accessed on the Council's website/intranet via the 'Equality Impact Assessment' link.

6.0 RECOMMENDATION(S) that

- 6.1 The publication of the Merthyr Tydfil Local Housing Market Assessment 2015 to form part of the Local Development Plan/ Local Housing Strategy evidence base and to assist in negotiating affordable housing on new housing developments be approved.

ELLIS COOPER
CORPORATE DIRECTOR CUSTOMER SERVICES

BACKGROUND PAPERS		
Title of Document(s)	Document(s) Date	Document Location

Consultation has been undertaken with the Corporate Management Team in respect of each proposal(s) and recommendation(s) set out in this report.