



Economy & Enterprise

Torfaen ~ inspiring business innovation



Economi a Mentergarwch

Torfaen ~ hybu arloesi mewn busnes

Strategy
2013-20



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Foreword by Councillor Bob Wellington, Leader of the Council



Over time, Torfaen has experienced many changes in its economy. Traditional heavy industries of coal and steel production have been replaced by manufacturing in predominately the automotive sector. Torfaen now has an opportunity to engage in the digital revolution and the opportunities it brings to economic vitality in the area.

The ambition is to position Torfaen as the digitally connected, green business gateway to Wales and to become a place shaped by its heritage that inspires opportunity, innovation and free thinking. Torfaen will become:

- A natural choice for a dynamic mix of businesses, not for profit enterprises and opportunity entrepreneurs.
- An environment in which an integrated but diverse and resilient economy can develop.

In view of the challenges facing public finance and the wider economy, and the need to revive and fundamentally refocus our enterprise ambitions, it is more important than ever that the potential drivers of wealth creation and competitiveness are clearly identified and understood. The new brand value of Torfaen Economy and Enterprise will enable greater market penetration and act as a powerful symbol of our commitment to help in increasing the productive potential of our local economy.

This will be reinforced by focussed activity streams that aim to stimulate local sustainable growth; help businesses to start-up and develop and to work with a range of stakeholders across all sectors to develop the business environment.

The growth in tourism spend in Torfaen continues and we anticipate that our commitment to develop our existing attractions, support the development of new attractions, increase the level of quality accommodation and by packaging the offering digitally, the current growth will continue.

Cllr Bob Wellington
Leader, Torfaen County Borough Council



Executive Summary by Alison Ward, Chief Executive, Torfaen County Borough Council



This Strategy aims to co-ordinate the activities of the public, private and voluntary sector, joining economic, social, environmental and community outcomes to help bring economic benefits for the Citizens of Torfaen.

With a number of emerging Welsh Government Initiatives including City Regions, Enterprise Zones, Local Growth Zones and Sustaining a Living Wales as well as a new round of structural funds, there are new opportunities for all our partners in Torfaen to collectively develop economic regeneration and to position Torfaen as the business gateway to Wales.

The Strategy outlines the key economic opportunities available to the Authority and its partners. Job creation remains a priority in all activity that is undertaken and this underpins a learning and skills agenda, developing our workforce and growing business success stories of the future.

Key businesses targeted for growth within the new EU Funding Programme include Tourism, Digital, Green and Energy sectors. This Strategy ensures we are able to capitalise on the opportunities presented to further develop these sectors. In addition, regional collaboration presents clear opportunities to unlock regeneration infrastructure projects to support tourism and economic development growth for south east Wales.

Building upon our already established partnerships with global technology companies, we will continue to target digital and knowledge based inward investors to locate their business in the County Borough, promoting Torfaen as a desirable place to live and work.

Alison Ward
Chief Executive, Torfaen County Borough Council



1. Introduction

The Torfaen Economy and Enterprise Strategy is a key strategic document to guide the future direction of Torfaen County Borough Council in partnership with the Local Service Board (LSB), the Welsh Government and other key partners in the public, private and third sectors in our endeavours to support economic growth.

Through the joining of economic, social, environmental and community outcomes, the Strategy will help guide and co-ordinate the activities of the public, private and voluntary sectors working towards the long term sustainable economic regeneration of Torfaen. It will help ensure that the benefits of economic growth and regeneration are realised and local communities take a full and active role in this process.

Torfaen's ambition is to become a place shaped by its heritage that inspires opportunity, innovation and free thinking. We want Torfaen's culture of enterprise to make us the natural choice for a dynamic mix of businesses, not for profit organisations and opportunity entrepreneurs. To do this, we want to create an environment in which an integrated but diverse and resilient economy can sustainably develop and enrich the unique local character.

The Strategy will be reviewed regularly to ensure it reflects changing opportunities and circumstances. Monitoring and evaluating the impact of actions and progress over time will be central to this process and essential to determine whether better outcomes are being achieved for the local community.

2. UK Economic Climate

The UK is experiencing unprecedented economic conditions with the longest double dip recession since the 1950's and rising to the challenges of this uncertain economic climate along with the global financial crisis continuing to deepen will be extremely demanding for all businesses and the third and public sectors.

It is likely that the UK will experience more frequent extreme weather events in the future and fuel and food are likely to continue to rise significantly in cost. Over the longer term, it will be necessary to ensure that the economy is more resilient to climate change as far as possible and is more able to cope with these changes.

3. National Policy Context

In May 2012 the Welsh Government announced the Wales Infrastructure and Investment Plan for Growth and Jobs (WIIP), which sets out how they will invest around £15bn over the next decade in capital priorities to boost growth and jobs. The key investments relevant to Torfaen within the document outline potential capital spending on high speed broadband service, highway maintenance, waste treatment projects, the 21st Century Schools programme and the new Specialist Critical Care Centre at Cwmbran.



Planning Policy Wales (5th Edition) will be the guide for all land use decisions within the planning process.

The Welsh Government's Economic Renewal Programme: **"A New Direction"** sets out the role devolved Government can play in providing the best conditions and framework to enable the private sector to grow and flourish.

The Department for Economy, Science and Transport (EST) is focussing on nine key sectors which are, or have the potential to be, key to the economy of Wales. Their aim is to nurture businesses in these sectors to maximise their prospects for market success. The nine key sectors are:-

- Creative Industries
- Information and Communication Technology (ICT)
- Energy and Environment
- Advanced Materials and Manufacturing
- Life Sciences
- Financial and Professional Services
- Food and Farming
- Construction
- Tourism

The Welsh Government's aim is to see businesses, large and small in each key sector, grow and create the jobs needed for the future development of the economy of Wales.

Furthermore, the Welsh Government's **"Delivering a Digital Wales"** framework maps out a digital future for everyone in Wales, through its vision: **'Wales – a Truly Digital Nation'**. Its aim is to help deliver digital skills for everyone: improve online public services, faster infrastructure and enhanced mobile coverage providing a wide-ranging base for economic growth.

The framework proposes:

- Everyone in Wales will enjoy the benefits of digital technologies
- Solid ICT skills for children and adults
- More convenient and efficient public services with joined-up delivery of education, health and social care
- A thriving economy driven by our technology research and development
- Flourishing Welsh cultural creativity
- Enhanced mobile and wireless coverage across Wales

The Welsh Government through its **"Living Wales"** Programme is committed to sustainable land, air, water and marine management in Wales and the adoption of an ecosystem approach. The Living Wales programme focuses on managing the Environment as a whole within the context of sustainable development.



Emerging Welsh Government Initiatives

- **City Regions** The Minister for EST established a group of economic experts to determine whether a City Region approach would deliver more jobs and greater prosperity than current approaches to economic development.

The City Regions report contains 22 key recommendations that include City Regions being recognised in south east Wales and Swansea Bay.

This has led to the EST Minister's announcement of a small task and finish group being established to take forward the South East Wales City Region. It is jointly chaired by the Leader of Torfaen County Borough Council and the Regional Chair of Price Waterhouse Cooper along with Monmouthshire County Council's Chief Executive. The group will focus on European structural funds: tourism, appropriate structural mechanisms and arrangements for engagement, and the identification of early wins.

Under the City Region concept the development of a robust transport system has resulted in the proposition for a City Regional Metro Transport System which links rail, road and bus services more effectively.

- **Enterprise Zone** The initiative is intended to offer specific incentives to attract new business to locations in Wales - using a tailor-made Welsh solution. The Welsh Government aims to strengthen the competitiveness of the Welsh economy through Enterprise Zones but believe this initiative would not be best served by replicating the approach taken in England.

Each area focuses on a key target sector; this approach is a crucial part of Welsh Government's aims in creating jobs and sustainable growth.

There are seven confirmed locations:

- o Cardiff - focussing on Financial and Professional Services sector
- o Anglesey - focussing on the Energy sector
- o Deeside - focussing on the Advanced Manufacturing sector
- o St Athan - focussing on the Aerospace sector
- o Ebbw Vale - focussing on the Advanced Manufacturing sector
- o Snowdonia - focussing on the Energy and Environment and ICT sectors
- o Haven Waterway - focussing on the Energy and Environment sector

- **Local Growth Zones** An innovative proposal submitted to the Welsh Government by Powys County Council for Local Growth Zones that looks at specific issues affecting the key market towns of Brecon, Llandrindod Wells and Newtown.

The report recommends the establishment of business-led initiatives which will develop:

- o Newtown town centre's role as a service centre
- o Fully develop Llandrindod Wells' role as an event and conference centre, and its role as a heritage tourism centre
- o Fully develop Brecon's role as a tourist centre, and its role as a boutique or niche shopping location

- **Sustaining a Living Wales** The Green Paper on future environmental and natural resource planning has proposed a fresh approach to establishing overall objectives with communities to enhance the opportunities provided by the local environment and address poor quality urban environments.

During recent years there has been greater realisation of the contribution that the natural environment can play in terms of regeneration. Apart from providing a stunning setting to work and live in, the environment offers opportunities for tourism, local sustainable food production, carbon storage and renewable energy generation and, when managed properly, can mitigate the damaging effects of climate change such as flooding.

- **A new round of EU Programmes** There are opportunities for a more joined up approach with the new European funding round which will focus on **More Jobs and Better Lives** – through Smart, Sustainable and Inclusive economic growth:

Smart: economy based on knowledge and innovation which is focused and targeted

Sustainable: a more resource efficient, greener and competitive economy

Inclusive: high employment economy - delivering social and territorial cohesion

The transport infrastructure is a vital component of the Welsh economy. Welsh Government is currently looking at the following key components to improve the current infrastructure:-

- The level of tolls charged for the Severn Bridge crossing when it reverts to government ownership
- Consultation on improving the M4 with regards to known traffic hotspots
- Electrification of the main line between London and Swansea and the Valleys branch lines
- Improved services between the London airports and Wales
- Purchase of Cardiff Airport to make it into a major transport hub and increase passenger numbers

Early in 2013, the Minister for Housing, Regeneration and Heritage launched a new Regeneration Framework '**Vibrant & Viable Places**'.

Its vision is:

"Everybody in Wales should live in vibrant, viable and sustainable communities with a strong local economy."

The regeneration policies encompass a range of integrated activities which aim to reverse economic, social and physical decline in order to achieve lasting improvement in areas where market forces will not be sufficient to achieve this without some support from Government.

The framework also describes how regeneration activities assist with transforming underperforming places and ensuring economic growth which is inclusive, sustainable and focussed. It outlines the scale of the regeneration challenges which underlines the



need for the Government in collaboration with the public and third sectors and with the private sector to support innovation and share good practice.

The document asserts that Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) are becoming increasingly important partners in delivering major projects in local areas. RSLs are not only equipped to deliver capital projects, but can reach marginalised groups through tenant engagement and empowerment. There is, however, some evidence emerging that Welfare Reform could be a significant threat to RSL business models.

Town centres are also seen as key economic drivers for Wales, with an understanding that they have a relationship to their communities and that they can unlock social well-being as well as being places of employment. There is a sense that Welsh Government policy is guiding town centres to be places that are generators of employment and places to live and identify with.

A review of regeneration activities led by the Welsh Government, with assistance from the Centre for Regeneration Excellence Wales (CREW), revealed three key messages. The review also benefited from the work undertaken by the National Assembly for Wales Enterprise and Business Committee during their inquiry on town centre regeneration. The three key messages were:

- Strengthened governance is needed to improve delivery. In particular, there is an opportunity to drive regional collaboration in a more structured way, including effective spatial planning for regeneration.
- Partnership is critical. Sustainable regeneration can only be delivered through genuine engagement with communities, local authorities and other public sector organisations, the third sector and the private sector.
- The Regeneration Areas approach is transforming some of our most disadvantaged places, but there are still opportunities to improve the way we invest at local level.

The **Community First Programme**, post March 2012, also states that within the Regeneration Areas, they will ensure that Community First complements wider regeneration activity as part of an integrated programme of investment. The programme will be required to demonstrate its contribution to addressing the education/skills, economic and health outcomes for disadvantaged people and communities.

4. Future Long Term Challenges - A Sustainable and Resilient Economy

Sustainable Development requires planning for the long-term; this includes potential future trends, and the subsequent discussion and development of responses that mitigate risk and enables opportunities to be captured.

In Torfaen we have begun to develop an approach that accounts for the trends and external environmental factors which are likely to impact on the local economy over the next 20 years.

Headline risks include:

- Climate change - this will increasingly impact on business through issues such as flooding of premises and disruption to services and supply chains
- Material security - raw materials as being at risk of supply interruption
- Energy security and costs - global demand increasing, UK supplies declining and costs rising
- Water security - too little or too much and in the wrong place
- Social impacts - including fuel/food poverty, which has the potential to drive further inequalities and hence lower resilience

With support from the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) we have begun the process of envisaging what a greener and more sustainable economy for Torfaen would look like. This process will enable us to determine where we are now and where we would like to be.

The Sustainable Development Scheme of the Welsh Government (2009) - **"One Wales: One Planet"** - defines a resilient and sustainable economy as 'able to develop whilst stabilising, then reducing, use of natural resources and reducing its contribution to climate change'.

Our approach has been guided by this research and confirms that there is no longer a "false choice" between green and growth: over the next 20 years, a successful local economy is likely to have more of the following characteristics:

- Low carbon
- Resource efficient
- Socially inclusive
- Resilient

Taking an approach that has sustainable development at its heart will help Torfaen achieve integrated social, economic and environmental wellbeing both now and in the future.



5. Regional and Local Policy Context

Regional

Torfaen was ranked very low in the Wales Audit Office report and indeed was the tenth least competitive place for new business in the UK in 2010.

A recent decision made by the South East Wales Economic Forum Board (SEWEF) recommended that:

- SEWEF cease to exist with effect from 1 April 2013; and
- SEWEF working with the WLGA and the South East Wales Directors of Environment and Regeneration Board (SEWDERB) to propose a single governance model in response to both the City Region agenda and the forthcoming Regeneration Board consultation, to encompass both a broad public sector contribution and an enhanced private sector one.

The intention is to ensure a regional approach is taken in facing the economic challenges within south east Wales and a model developed that is 'fit for purpose'.

The South East Wales Regional Partnership Board (made up of the Leaders and Chief Executives of the 10 Local Authorities within the south east Wales area) drives regional collaboration activity and as part of this role will consider proposals generated by SEWDERB through a number of task and finish sub groups and to provide a link through to the WLGA South East Wales Regional Board.

In addition, West Wales and the Valleys also qualifies for EU funding support as at the time the EU budget was agreed in December 2005 the region's average Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per head was just below 75% of the European GDP average – the qualification limit for the highest level of EU regional support, classifying us as a Less Well Developed Region.

Therefore, there are ten task and finish groups established in the south east to provide this link to the WLGA in preparation for the new EU programmes, they are:

- Transport Infrastructure and Public Transport Development
- Town Centre and Urban Regeneration
- Skills Development and Worklessness
- Business Development and Support and Development of Business Sites and Premises
- Social Enterprise Development
- Tourism
- Green Economy and Energy Efficiency
- ICT Development
- Rural Development Plan
- Delivery Models

The Green Economy and Energy Efficiency and ICT Development represent areas that are likely to feature as key growth opportunities in the new EU programmes with Torfaen County Borough Council acting as the lead authority in respect of the Green Economy and Energy Efficiency theme, the Skills Development and Worklessness and the Delivery Models groups.

The current EU funded Valleys Regional Park programme and the Valleys 'Heart and Soul' marketing initiatives offer funding opportunities and a greater regional approach to tourism, access to our natural heritage and informal recreation facilities.

Local

The Torfaen Community Strategy for 2011-2025 includes the following aspirations to be achieved in partnership with other agencies:

- People in Torfaen enjoy a prosperous economy
- People in Torfaen are educated for life
- People live in quality affordable homes

Torfaen County Borough Council's Corporate Plan 2011-2016 prioritises the provision of support for the most vulnerable citizens of the county borough and recognises the challenges to be faced by all residents and includes:

- *Supporting initiatives which generate employment and training for work opportunities. (Including housing development which can contribute towards employment and training opportunities particularly in construction)*

Torfaen County Borough Council's Single Integrated Plan (SIP) for 2012-2018 aims to deliver the above aspirations and progress will be monitored through tracking and iterating actions around the following outcome indicators:

- People in Torfaen are educated for life
 - Key stage 2 - % pupils achieving expected levels (level 4+: English, Welsh, Maths, Science, and Core Subject Indicator (CSI))
 - Key stage 3 - % pupils achieving expected levels (level 5+: English, Welsh, Maths, Science, and CSI)
 - Key stage 4 - % pupils achieving level 2 threshold (English, Welsh, Maths)
 - Attendance - Primary and Secondary
 - Exclusions
 - Percentage of 16 - 24 year olds who are not in employment or education
- People in Torfaen enjoy a prosperous economy
 - Number or percentage employed with jobs by industry
 - Number or percentage unemployed
 - Number out of work benefits by age and benefit type
 - Number of new business start ups

- Percentage of income related benefits
- Percentage of children in households on income related benefits
- People in Torfaen live in clean, green, sustainable communities
 - % of electricity generated from renewable sources
 - Tonnes of carbon dioxide (CO₂) per capita
 - Number of private sector homes benefiting from energy efficiency (measured and monitored via the Torfaen Energy Partnership (TEP))
 - Number of properties built within new developments that meet Code Level 4 and above

Torfaen County Borough Council has an aspiration of becoming one of the most digitally connected and technology enabled communities in the UK. Currently, Torfaen County Borough Council is leading a systems wide change to transform the lives of the people of Torfaen.

Developing and progressing delivery of major development areas for both business and housing in the Local Development Plan (LDP) will help to underline sustainable development, maximising the social, environmental and economic aspects of regeneration.

Torfaen County Borough Council's regeneration strategies incorporate economic, social and environmental objectives. Physical improvements that can assist in guiding priorities for investment and intervention to assist economic growth and therefore act to complement the delivery of this Strategy's objectives are also included.

6. Torfaen Economic Baseline

Location

Torfaen lies in the south east corner of Wales and offers good transport links to the UK market.

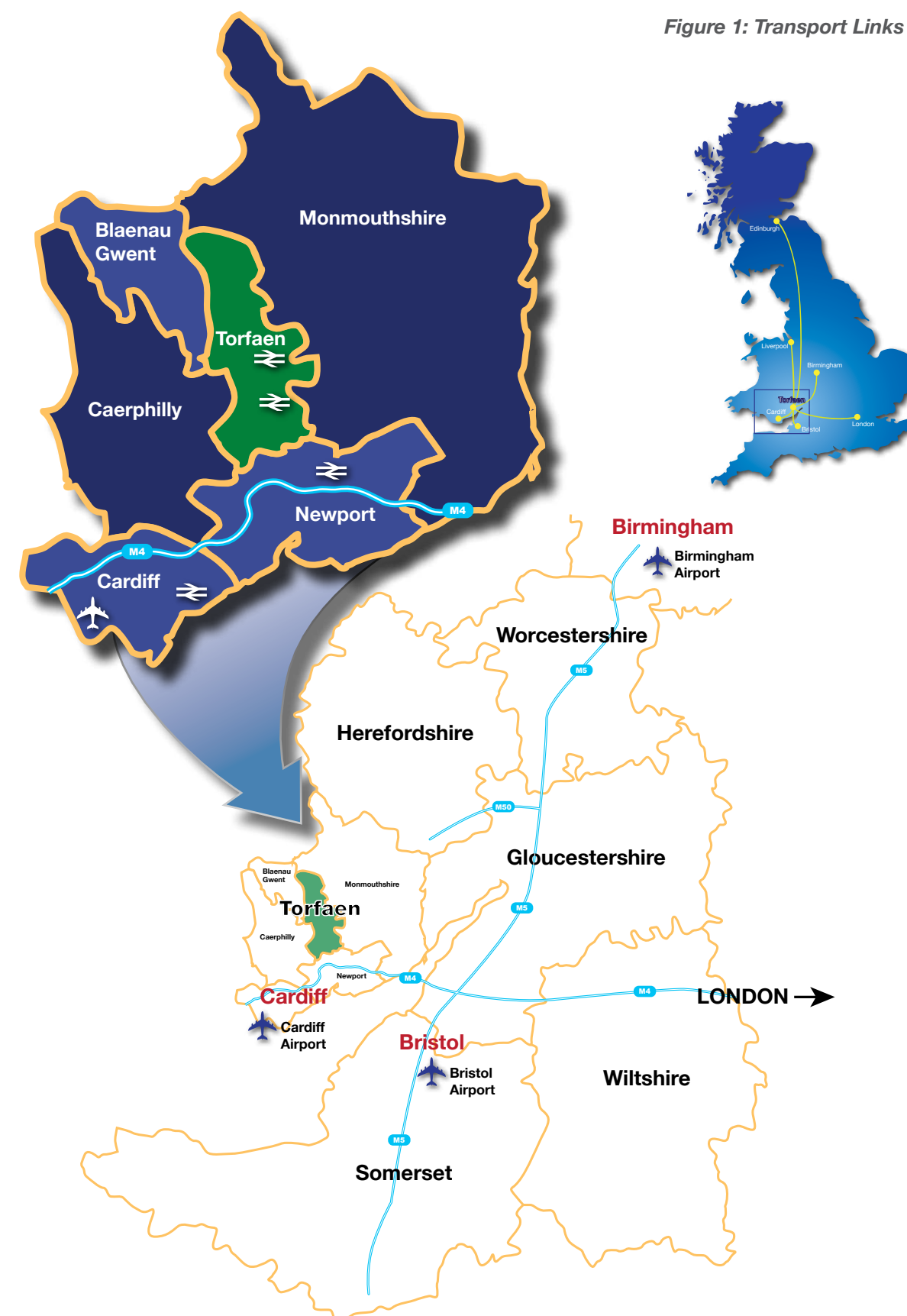
Excellent motorway access means Torfaen is just 2 hours from London and 30 minutes from Bristol and Cardiff via the M4. The county is just 90 minutes from Birmingham via the M50/M5.

These excellent road links provide easy access to local, regional and national airports at Cardiff, Bristol and Birmingham.

Good rail access to major cities is available from both Cwmbran station and Newport station which lies 10 minutes to the south of Torfaen.

What makes Torfaen unique is that this accessibility is complemented by first class digital access right across the area.

Figure 1: Transport Links



Learning and Career Development

There are 32 primary schools, 7 secondary schools and one college campus in Torfaen.

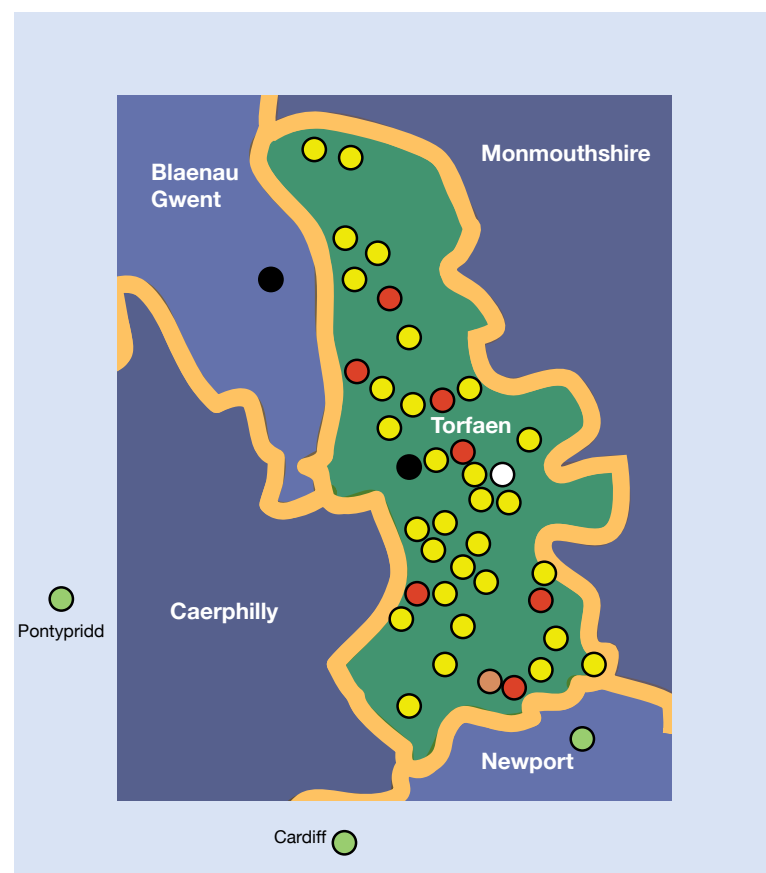
Torfaen County Borough Council recognises the significance of learning in driving the transformation of the county. It is committed to improving the level of pupil attainment and has established the Education Achievement Service, in partnership with four neighbouring Councils, to focus on the significant performance challenge facing the region on issues such as literacy and numeracy, closing the attainment gap for disadvantaged pupils and Key Stage 4 outcomes. Torfaen also aims to invest £286 million in ensuring that all of its school buildings continue to be fit for purpose and meet the demands of 21st Century learning.

Torfaen County Borough Council has an established partnership with the University of South Wales and other links with Cardiff University. It is a partner in the development of the University of the Heads of the Valleys.

Torfaen County Borough Council is developing a network of linked digital academies in schools, Coleg Gwent and the community. This is complemented by the Springboard Business Innovation Centre~Wales which provides a touch down for inward investment projects along with facilities for business research, new business investment and supporting new graduates in their early entrepreneurial careers.

Figure 2

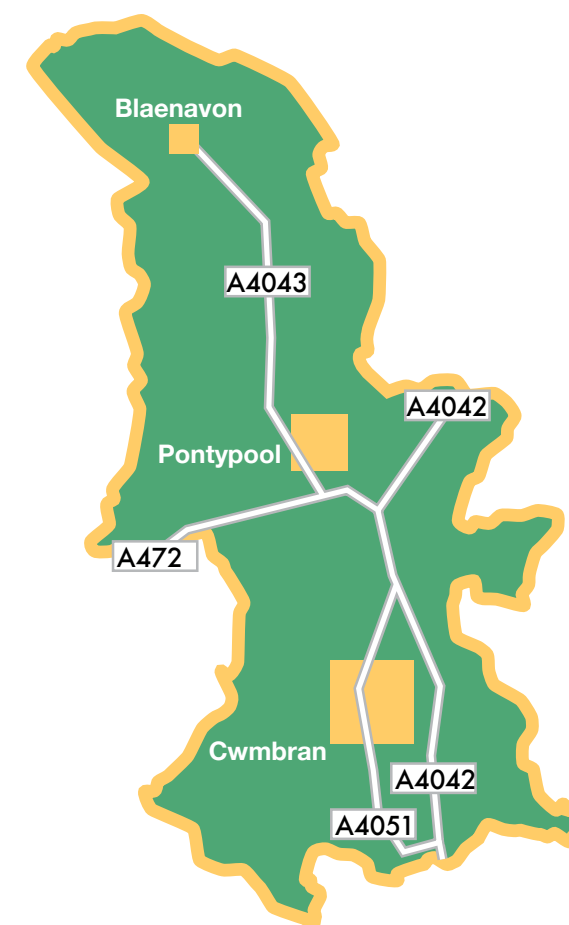
- Key:
- Primary Schools
 - Secondary Schools
 - Special Schools
 - Further Education (FE) College
 - Springboard
 - Universities



Population and Communities

91,200 people live in Torfaen in three communities. (2011 Census)

Figure 3



The town of Cwmbran forms the south of Torfaen. It has an excellent road infrastructure, existing premises ready for use and prime sites for investment.

At the heart of the valley is Pontypool which forms the focus for local government and administration. The town provides key services and facilities to the communities in north Torfaen.

In the north lies the town of Blaenavon, famous as a World Heritage Site, and now the location for the South Wales Collaboration Centre Shared Resource Service (SRS) that lies at the heart of our approach to digital transformation. The north of Torfaen is eligible for significant investment grant assistance from the Welsh Government and European sources.

Whilst travel north to south to population centres and employment opportunities is readily accessible, public transport across valleys in order to access employment and tertiary education is inadequate, particularly from Blaenavon and nearby villages. The north of the borough features highly in the most deprived Wards in the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) and coupled with lower than Torfaen average car ownership and higher than average numbers of young people not in education, employment or training, this risks further entrenching issues of inequality and access.



Employment by Sectors

Torfaen has traditionally been the home of heavy industry. However, these days a diverse range of sectors are well represented across the county borough.

Torfaen’s current population is 91,200 of which 44,400 are male and 46,800 are female. (2011 Census)

The data below provides the make up of business sectors within Torfaen

Figure 4

Employment by Broad Sector, 2008 (%)		
Industry	Torfaen	Wales
Total Employed	34,800	Not Available
Public administration, education & health (Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) L,M,N)	36.4%	32.9%
Manufacturing (SIC D)	20.4%	13.7%
Distribution, hotels and restaurants (SIC G,H)	20.3%	23%
Banking, finance and insurance, etc. (SIC J,K)	12.6%	14.1%
Construction (SIC F)	4.2%	5.2%
Transport and communications (SIC I)	3.1%	4.3%
Other services (SIC O,P,Q)	2.5%	4.8%
Energy and water (SIC C,E)	0.3%	0.6%
Agriculture and fishing (SIC A,B)	*	0.2%

Source: National Statistics (Nomis: www.nomisweb.co.uk). Annual Business Inquiry, 2008 Crown copyright material is reproduced with the permission of the Controller of HMSO. * = Data restricted

Torfaen Employment by Industry

Figure 5

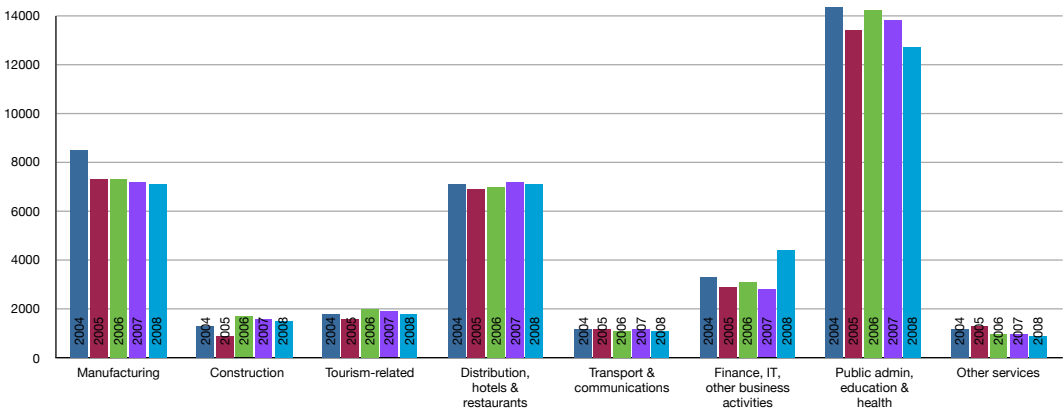


Figure 6

Torfaen Employment by Industry					
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Manufacturing	8500	7300	7300	7200	7100
Construction	1300	900	1700	1600	1500
Tourism-related	1800	1600	2000	1900	1800
Distribution, hotels & restaurants	7100	6900	7000	7200	7100
Transport & communications	1200	1200	1100	1200	1100
Finance, Information Technology (IT), other business activities	3300	2900	3100	2800	4400
Public admin, education & health	15300	13400	14200	13800	12700
Other services	1200	1300	1000	1000	900

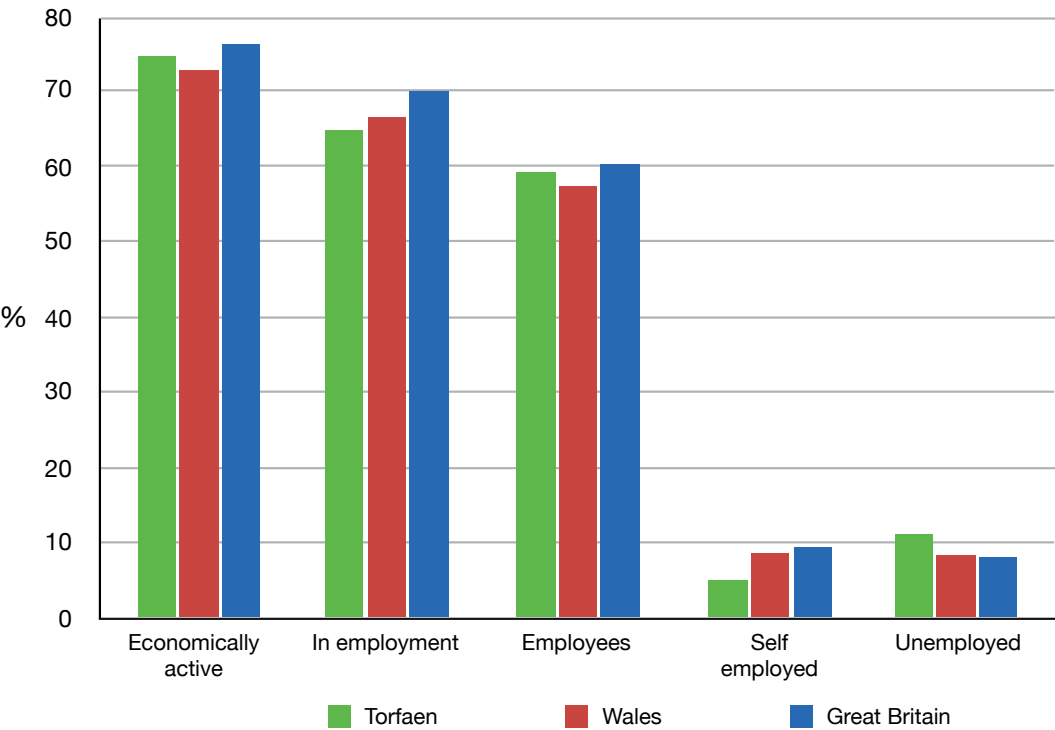
Source: National Statistics (Nomis: www.nomisweb.co.uk). Annual Business Inquiry, 2008 Crown copyright material is reproduced with the permission of the Controller of HMSO.

The above employment and industry figures show that although manufacturing was always considered the main employment sector in the local economy, over the period shown, it has experienced a steady decline which has been offset by an increase in the ICT/Finance sector.



Economic Activity and Employment

Figure 7



Recent research carried out by the University of South Wales on behalf of SEWDERB shows that advanced manufacturing is still prominent within Torfaen and it could form the basis for the development of a business cluster.

Figure 8

Percentage of Population Economically Active & Employment				
	Torfaen	Torfaen	Wales	Great Britain
Economically active	43,400	74.8%	73%	76.5%
In employment	37,800	65%	66.7%	70.2%
Employees	34,400	59.4%	57.5%	60.4%
Self employed	3,000	5%	8.6%	9.4%
Unemployed	4,700	11.1%	8.4%	8.1%

Source: National Statistics (Nomis: www.nomisweb.co.uk). Annual Business Inquiry, 2012 Crown copyright material is reproduced with the permission of the Controller of HMSO.

Although Torfaen is in line with regards to overall economic activity, it is important to note that it is significantly lower in self employment and higher in unemployment. The current economic downturn has contributed towards the higher unemployment figures.

Out of Work Benefits

Figure 9

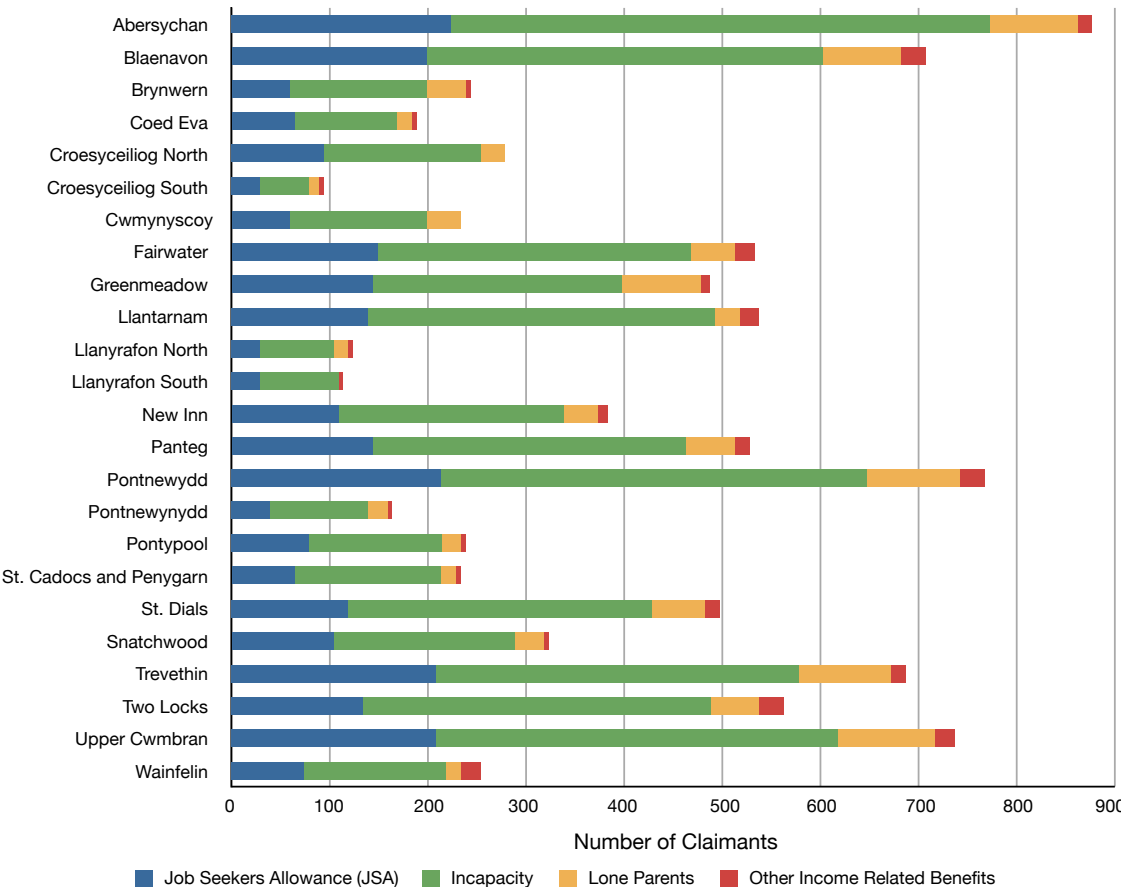


Figure 10

Out of Work Benefits by Ward										
	JSA		Incapacity		Lone Parents		Other Income Related Benefits		Total	
		%		%		%		%		%
Abersychan	225	5.3	550	13	90	2.1	15	0.4	880	20.8
Blaenavon	200	5.6	405	11.3	80	2.2	25	0.7	710	19.8
Brynwern	60	5.6	140	13.2	40	3.8	5	0.5	245	23.1
Coed Eva	65	4.2	105	6.8	15	1	5	0.3	190	12.3
Croesyceiliog North	95	4.7	160	7.9	25	1.2	0	0	280	13.8
Croesyceiliog South	30	3	50	5	10	1	5	0.5	95	9.5
Cwmynyscoy	60	7.2	140	16.9	35	4.2	0	0	235	28.3
Fairwater	150	4.2	320	9	45	1.3	20	0.6	535	15.1
Greenmeadow	145	5.4	255	9.4	80	3	10	0.4	490	18.2
Llantarnam	140	4.3	355	11	25	0.8	20	0.6	540	16.7
Llanyrafon North	30	2.7	75	6.8	15	1.4	5	0.5	125	11.4
Llanyrafon South	30	2	80	5.3	0	0	5	0.3	115	7.6
New Inn	110	3	230	6.2	35	0.9	10	0.3	385	10.4
Panteg	145	3.2	320	7.1	50	1.1	15	0.3	530	11.7
Pontnewydd	215	5.5	435	11.2	95	2.4	25	0.6	770	19.7
Pontnewynydd	40	4.3	100	10.7	20	2.1	5	0.5	165	17.6
Pontypool	80	6.5	135	11	20	1.6	5	0.4	240	19.5
St. Cadocs and Penygarn	65	6.9	150	15.9	15	1.6	5	0.5	235	24.9
St. Dials	120	5.6	310	14.4	55	2.5	15	0.7	500	23.2
Snatchwood	105	8.1	185	14.3	30	2.3	5	0.4	325	25.1
Trevethin	210	9.4	370	16.5	95	4.2	15	0.7	690	30.8
Two Locks	135	3.2	355	8.5	50	1.2	25	0.6	565	13.5
Upper Cwmbran	210	6.1	410	12	100	2.9	20	0.6	740	21.6
Wainfelin	75	4.6	145	8.9	15	0.9	20	1.2	255	15.6
Torfaen	2,750	4.9	5,780	10.2	1,040	1.8	290	0.5	9,860	17.4
Wales		4		9.4		1.6		0.5		15.5
Great Britain		3.8		6.5		1.5		0.4		12.2

Source: National Statistics (Nomis: www.nomisweb.co.uk). Annual Business Inquiry, 2012 Crown copyright material is reproduced with the permission of the Controller of HMSO.

Figure 10 indicates a predominance of claimants living in the same wards, however the overall percentage figure for Torfaen (17.4%) is still significantly higher than the comparable figures for Wales (15.5%) and the UK (12.2%).

Business Start Ups

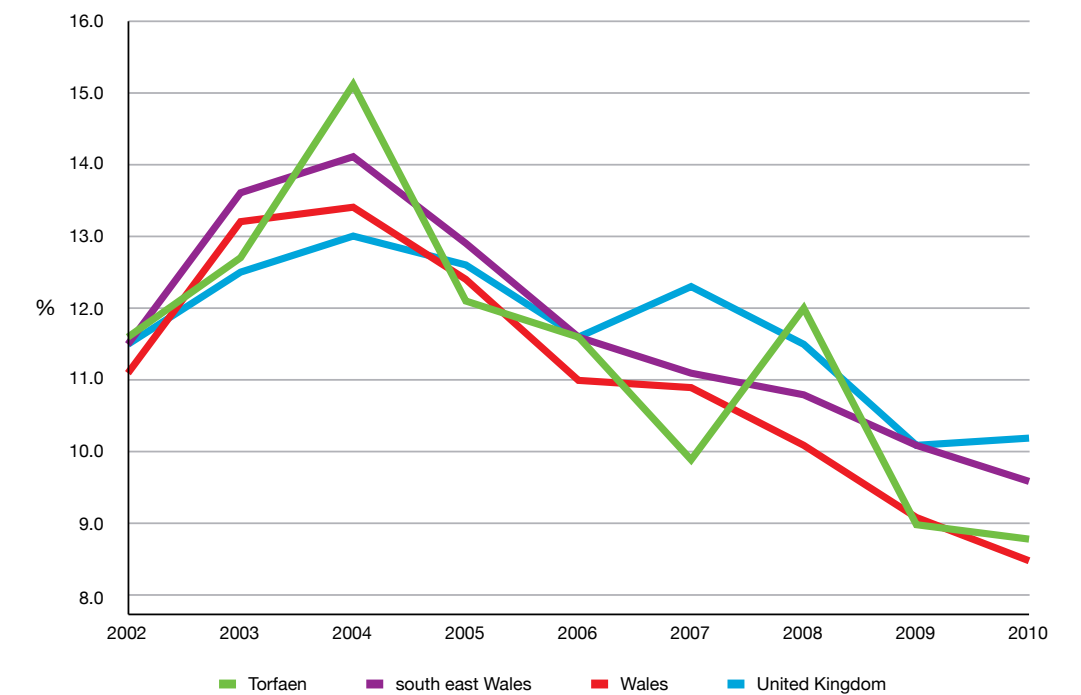


Figure 11

Figure 12

New Start Up Rate as a Percentage of all Active Enterprises									
	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Torfaen	11.6%	12.7%	15.1%	12.1%	11.6%	9.9%	12.0%	9.0%	8.8%
south east Wales	11.5%	13.6%	14.1%	12.9%	11.6%	11.1%	10.8%	10.1%	9.6%
Wales	11.1%	13.2%	13.4%	12.4%	11.0%	10.9%	10.1%	9.1%	8.5%
United Kingdom	11.5%	12.5%	13.0%	12.6%	11.6%	12.3%	11.5%	10.1%	10.2%

Source: Welsh Government Stats Wales (www.statswales.wales.gov.uk).

Years 2009 and 2010 are acknowledged by the UK Government as being the start of the worst economic depression experienced by the UK since the 1930's and the increase in business start up numbers is seen as vital to the recovery of the economy.



Births / Deaths and Active Enterprises

Figure 13

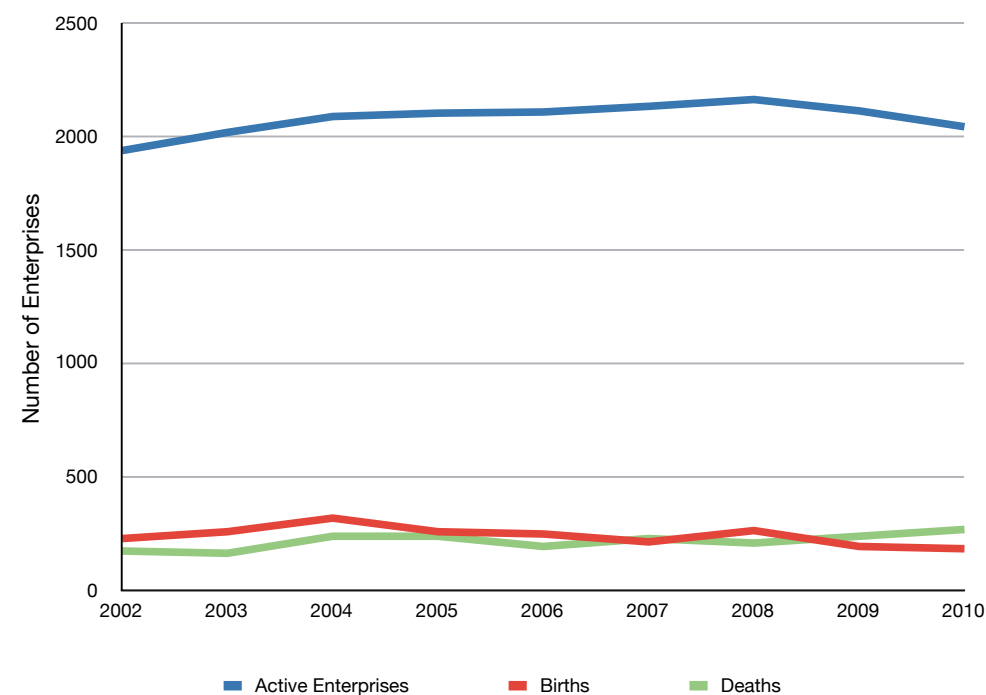


Figure 14

Births/Deaths and Active Enterprises									
	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Active Enterprises	1935	2015	2085	2100	2105	2130	2160	2110	2040
Births	225	255	315	255	245	210	260	190	180
Deaths	170	160	235	235	190	225	205	235	265

Source: Welsh Government Stats Wales (www.statswales.wales.gov.uk).

The number of businesses in Torfaen has remained above 2000 since 2003 but the trend shows that the number of businesses ceasing to trade is now greater than the number started which illustrates the need for local business support to improve these numbers.

Average Gross Weekly Wage

Figure 15

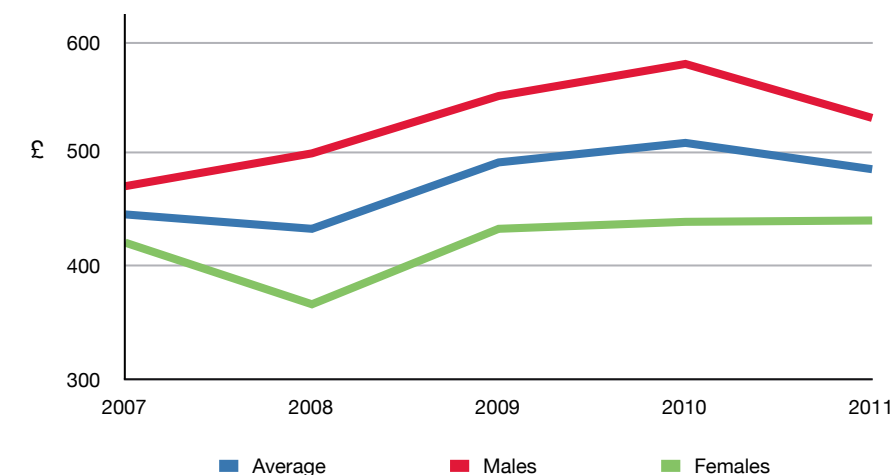


Figure 16

Average Gross Weekly Wage			
	Average	Males	Females
2007	446.70	471.80	421.60
2008	433.90	501.00	366.80
2009	492.95	552.00	433.90
2010	510.30	580.50	440.10
2011	486.90	532.50	441.30

Source: Welsh Government Stats Wales (www.statswales.wales.gov.uk).

The Average Gross Weekly Wage indicates the level of spend available to local Torfaen residents and measures the capacity of contribution available to local citizens to the local GDP. It also indicates the quality of jobs using income generated as a measure. The higher this figure is, the more services and products required will be, which gives businesses the opportunity to provide them.

The average wage has steadily increased from 2007 but the average wage for women remains much lower than the average wage for men within Torfaen. Average wage in Torfaen is £486.90 against the average for Wales of £519.40 which indicates that there is potential for another £32.50 per working person to spend on local goods and services.

Claimants by Working Age

Figure 17

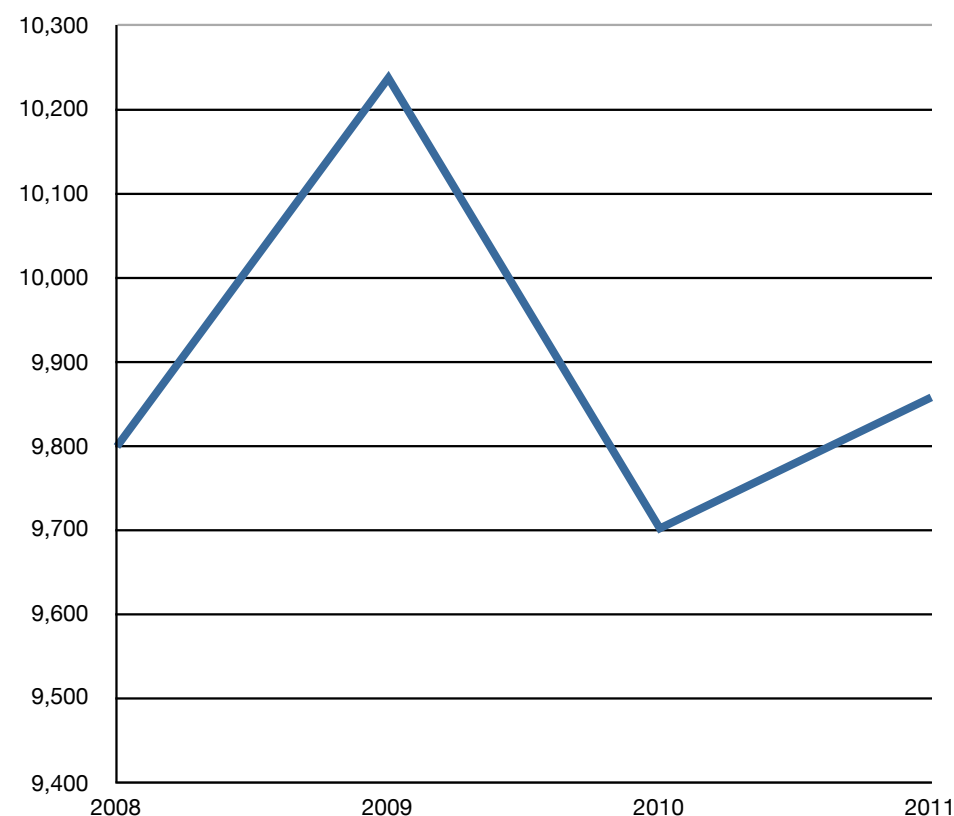


Figure 18

Claimants by Working Age				
Date	Torfaen	Torfaen %	Wales %	Great Britain %
2008	9,800	17.2	15.3	11.7
2009	10,250	18	16.2	12.7
2010	9,700	17.2	15.4	12.1
2011	9,860	17.4	15.4	12.2

Source: Welsh Government Stats Wales (www.statswales.wales.gov.uk).

The measurement of claimants by working age is an important indicator measure, in particular as the new Welfare Reform measures are predicted to have a significant adverse impact upon local residents and therefore the economy, through a reduced local spend capacity and therefore impact upon local businesses.

The number of claimants in Torfaen is 2% higher than Wales and 5.2% higher than the UK which indicates that Torfaen suffers from high economic inactivity.

Employment Rate by Age

Figure 19

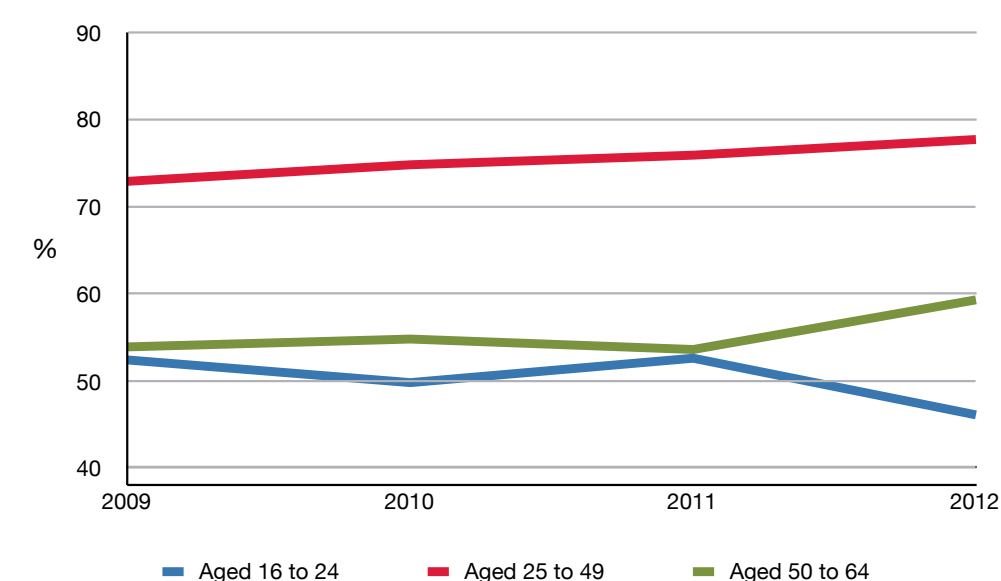


Figure 20

Employment Rate by Age				
	2009	2010	2011	2012
Aged 16 to 24	52.3%	49.7%	52.5%	46%
Aged 25 to 49	72.8%	74.7%	75.8%	77.6%
Aged 50 to 64	53.8%	54.7%	53.5%	59.2%

Source: Welsh Government Stats Wales (www.statswales.wales.gov.uk).

All our employment initiatives are traditionally aimed at job creation and wealth. It is important that overall figures are not taken in isolation and that groups (e.g. 16 - 24 year olds) are not missed. This is vital to the skills agenda and the kind of jobs we wish to create.

The decrease in 16 - 24 year old employment needs to be addressed as economic recovery will be based upon the future work force. Without employment opportunities for young people, it will be impossible to put skills learned into practice and these may be lost to the economy.



Key Economic Findings, Issues and Opportunities

Key Findings and Issues

- The number of out of work benefits claimants in Torfaen is 2% higher than Wales and 5.2% higher than the UK, which indicates that Torfaen suffers from high economic inactivity.
- The average wage in Torfaen is £486.90 against the average for Wales of £519.40 which indicates that potentially a further £32.50 per working person could be available to spend on local goods and services. It may also indicate that barriers for women to obtain or take up full employment need to be addressed, such as continued child care support.
- The current overall business activity profile mirrors the current recession as business start-ups decline and businesses ceasing to trade continue to rise. This may indicate the requirement for further business support programmes.
- The predominance of claimants are living in the same wards, however the overall percentage figure for Torfaen (17.4%) is significantly higher than the comparable figures for Wales (15.5%) and the UK (12.2%). Many of these communities benefit from training opportunities, but need a more localised focus on job opportunities and enterprise support.
- There is a severe lack of available affordable housing across the borough, with Torfaen's social housing being over subscribed, the private rented sector under developed, owner occupied homes in poor condition and a number of empty properties that need to be brought back into use. Coupled with reductions in capital investment and an increasingly impoverished society it is essential that housing led regeneration ensures economic gain is maximised.
- There are good roads and access to the south of the borough, public transport, cycling and walking routes which are essential for people to get to and from their homes and businesses. It will be necessary to ensure these improvements continue as needs change in the future. The North Torfaen Road Strategy provides key improvements proposals that will improve the roads and public transport for easy and safe access to businesses and homes in the north of the borough.
- The development and implementation of a Green Infrastructure Strategy will ensure the balance of development within the area is progressive and sustainable.
- Employment levels are levelling off in general terms for Torfaen. The statistics show a significant increase in unemployment in the 16 – 24 age group. This is a key consideration within the strategy and training, mentoring and enterprise support initiatives need to be provided.

Key Economic Opportunities

- Ensuring planning is undertaken with a view to the long term. Future trends need to be identified and responses developed that avoid or mitigate risk whilst also capitalising on any opportunities.

- Key business sectors targeted for growth within the new EU Funding Programmes post 2013 need to be capitalised upon i.e. Tourism, Digital, Green and Energy sectors.
- Opportunities also exist to support the rural economy through the Rural Development Programme (RDP) which will be subject to a further EU funding programme. The Rural Local Development Strategy sets out to improve market access for micro and small-scale rural producers to improve the quantity and quality of rural businesses in Torfaen. Creating opportunities for networking and collaboration between businesses and other sectors.
- Regional collaboration opportunities to develop major economic development initiatives as identified through SEWDERB's research and current work being undertaken into the possible City Region and proposed Regional Regeneration Framework. There are opportunities to unlock regeneration infrastructure projects to assist tourism and economic development growth.
- Collaboration opportunities with RSLs and other providers in developing community initiatives, employability schemes and enterprise support.
- Opportunity to explore, with the Welsh Government, possible establishment of a 'Digital Enterprise Zone' with other adjacent Local Authorities through regional collaborative work ensuring the SRS plays a key role. Digital connectivity also provides opportunity for further tourism development.
- Participation within the SEWDERB task and finish groups to develop greater joined up regional economic and skills interventions.
- Increase the Knowledge Economy Sector particularly through the improved marketing of the Springboard Business Innovation Centre~Wales. There is potential to create digital/knowledge economy clusters within Torfaen. Opportunities exist to increase partnership working with Welsh Government, other economic development initiatives and universities to create new business start-up opportunities.
- The Springboard Business Innovation Centre~Wales offers opportunities to develop it as Wales' first choice incubation centre for touch down facilities to inward investment projects strategically located on the M4.
- Develop and proactively market the 'Strategic Action Areas' within the LDP to create a mix of business, leisure and tourism developments (i.e. Cwmbran) and/or potential mixed tenure housing developments that encourage private sector investment.
- Town centres can provide community and transport hubs offering leisure, cultural and retail facilities. Pontypool town has premises and adequate footfall to provide important retail start up and training opportunities. This could help supply the larger retail employers in Cwmbran with good quality staff assisting in the maintenance of Cwmbran as a sub regional town centre facility.
- Manufacturing was always considered the main employment sector in the local economy, but has experienced a steady decline which has been offset by an increase in the ICT/Finance sector. The importance of these key sectors needs to be recognised within the strategy and targeted accordingly.
- Torfaen, however, has niche advanced manufacturing companies that are successful and should be supported and encouraged to grow and diversify as they provide quality employment for local people.

- Although Torfaen is in line with Wales and Great Britain with regards to overall economic activity, it is important to note that it is significantly lower in self employment and higher in unemployment. This presents an opportunity to provide key support to individual nascent entrepreneurs.
- A well managed historic and natural environment contributing to the distinctive character of Torfaen and Wales' landscape and towns with heritage conserved presents additional tourism, retail and cultural opportunities.
- Development of inward investment marketing materials and a web site will provide relevant information for Members, Chief Executives, Property Management companies and Senior Partners to promote Torfaen during their business meetings and networking events. A clear line of communication between Torfaen County Borough Council and the potential inward investors needs to be established and managed through creating a strong professional relationship.



Springboard Business Innovation Centre~Wales

7. A New Chapter of Economic Development in Torfaen

In considering the key findings and issues identified earlier it is imperative that job creation remains one of Torfaen County Borough Council's and its partners' key priorities. The geographical linkages we have between Bristol, Birmingham and Cardiff are a major advantage. These major centres of economic growth and activity through our road, rail and bridge networks offer an unprecedented 'triangle of opportunity' through which to harness inward investment and encourage international business development. This undoubtedly has resonance for the City Region model of economic development.

Torfaen is a small valley with strong heritage and cultural links to its industrial past. It is a diverse area, hosting a World Heritage Site which attracts around 230,000 visitors a year. A Convergence Area designation in the north and mid valley areas and Cwmbran; a regional destination shopping centre and "New Town" in the south. Our already well established linkages and shared ambition to drive growth in a digital south east Wales can bring further economic opportunities.

Currently, our economy is based mainly on the public sector, construction, distribution, transport, financial and business services with a growth in knowledge, food and tourism economies. As a result of the nature and positioning of these sectors and their fundamental relationship with sustainable development, significant potential is also being identified for diversification into low carbon and renewable technologies and the knowledge economy industries. It is this kind of integrated and diverse economy that we see as key to delivering the required step change in Torfaen's future economic performance and relative strength. Sustainable and successful economies are built on a wide range of sectors providing a variety of jobs and business opportunities for a diverse and skilled population.

We want to position Torfaen as the 'digitally connected green gateway to Wales', placing ourselves uniquely in the UK and the world. Growth will be targeted in the knowledge economy that promotes and supports broadband as the fourth utility; supports technology rich living and learning and the location and advance of a range of high order blue chip businesses. Alongside this, significant development will also be focussed on complementary low carbon and renewable technologies such as wind, solar and hydro-power. These will be explored because they will serve existing activity and sectors as well as having the ability to be developed in their own right.

There are also a number of assets and key drivers relevant to our economic ambitions for Torfaen:

- The region has positioned itself as Wales' 'digital valley' and is home to the SRS, an information technology hub for public service agencies in south east Wales.
- The diverse nature of Torfaen; a World Heritage Site in the north, a market town at the centre and a "new town" in the south.
- Schools developing children with high quality digital skills and opportunities to offer the digital and knowledge economies.
- Strategic positioning - there is unique potential for Torfaen to establish a more prominent position within the cross boundary regional economy. With good physical infrastructure and links and potential for universal high-speed broadband coverage, Torfaen is a Welsh local authority with a wider UK and global outlook.



- Strategic alignment with the University of South Wales and the opportunity that exists to integrate economic growth with the new business and enterprise models being explored by the well-respected institution.
- A strong tourism offer: based on our industrial heritage highlighted with our World Heritage Site status along with our natural heritage and stunning landscape, offers opportunities for diversification and enhancement through linkages with the green and digital growth economies of the future. The 'future-proofing' of traditional sectors through synergies with new growth sectors will heighten the relevance of the existing offer. Further opportunities can be capitalised on through the established partnership working within the Valleys Regional Park programme and the Valleys Marketing initiative.
- The potential for a low carbon future and renewable forms of energy production, alongside synergistic and newly emerging digital technologies.
- The potential to build upon any early indications of Torfaen manufacturing to explore the development of a cluster of advanced manufacturing business.

8. Torfaen Economy and Enterprise - Strategic Direction

In order to move into this new chapter of ambitious and sustainable growth, it is necessary to build a strong resonant brand based upon the green economy principles of sustainability. To achieve this a new market focussed product which is identifiable both to local commerce and within Torfaen County Borough Council is to be established. Torfaen Economy and Enterprise encompasses the economic development and regeneration teams of Torfaen County Borough Council, members of the business development programmes and local businesses to create a dynamic, purposeful and renewed focus on driving economic development within the area of Torfaen.

Torfaen Economy and Enterprise will create a brand which is recognisable, cohesive and fresh. Focussed activity streams that aim to stimulate local sustainable growth, help businesses to start and develop and delivered in partnership with a wide range of stakeholders will underpin the launch of the new brand.

The medium to long term ambition is for Torfaen Economy and Enterprise to:

- Plan and deliver long-term smart and sustainable economic growth
- Strategically position Torfaen for longer-term success
- Provide direct and specialist support for business, including helping local existing businesses overcome short-term shocks
- Help to accelerate major infrastructure and regeneration projects through securing funding where possible including European Union, Welsh Government grants, Heritage Lottery Funding, and Section 106/Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

- Market and promote Torfaen's quality of life and vibrant communities and their role in nurturing social and financial capital, creative energy and a mix of businesses, not-for-profit agencies and entrepreneurs
- Develop an interactive website and business directory that are user friendly and a 24-7 shop-front for our offer
- Gather evidence, information and market intelligence
- Provide Enterprise Facilitation support to local communities to encourage start ups and entrepreneurial culture
- Provide training and skills for the workplace
- Improve economic development links with schools, colleges and universities
- Provide business account manager services and agency support
- Develop and deliver 'investor ready' support packages
- Work with local businesses to develop local procurement opportunities

In view of the challenges facing public finance and the wider economy and the need to revive and fundamentally refocus our enterprise ambitions, it is more important than ever that the potential drivers of wealth creation and competitiveness are clearly identified and understood. The brand value of Torfaen Economy and Enterprise will enable greater market penetration and capitalisation and act as a powerful symbol of our commitment to increasing the productive potential of our local economy.

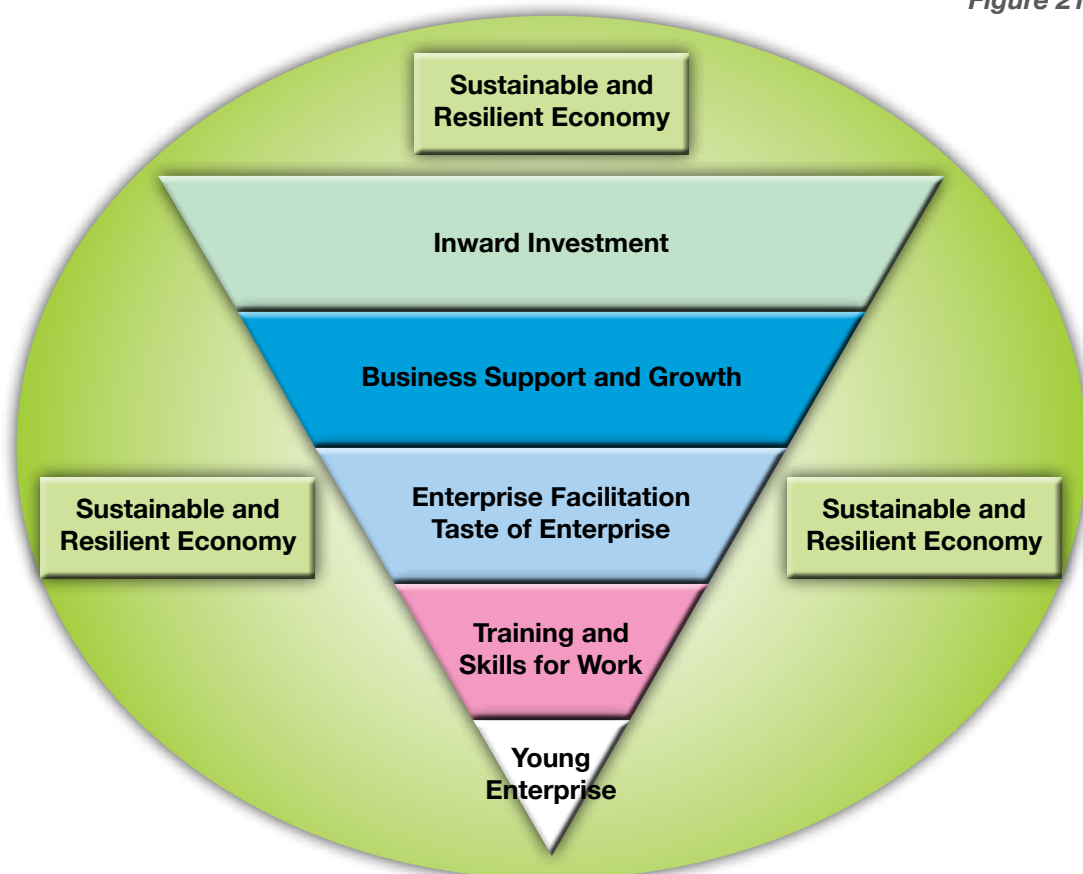
Torfaen Economy and Enterprise – Strategic Approach

The aim of the Strategy is to position Torfaen as the digitally connected, green business gateway to Wales and to become a place shaped by its heritage that inspires opportunity, innovation and free thinking.

Torfaen will become:

- A natural choice for a dynamic mix of businesses, not for profit enterprises and opportunity entrepreneurs
- An environment in which an integrated but diverse and resilient economy can develop
- An Authority which works with local businesses to develop local procurement opportunities

Figure 21



9. Strategic Objectives

- SO1** Establish a sustainable and resilient economy approach for Torfaen
- SO2** Delivering the entrepreneurial and business growth environment
- SO3** Delivering the Digital Valley
- SO4** Learning, skills and training to equip our workforce
- SO5** Citizen-centred activity that effectively responds to the needs of the 'Information Society'
- SO6** Delivering better public services in order to be at the forefront of technological advancement through improving the citizen experience and services becoming more efficient
- SO7** Infrastructure that effectively supports and enables inclusion, innovation and service advancement
- SO8** Physical infrastructure to enhance the environment and improve economic development opportunities

10. Delivery Implementation

A Sustainable and Resilient Economy

Given the increasing challenges facing Torfaen and the wider economy, developing an approach that integrates sustainable development as a central principle will help Torfaen County Borough Council "join up" social, economic and environmental wellbeing programmes, both now and in the future.

Torfaen County Borough Council will look to ensure that all aspects of our activity are informed by the need to transition to a greener, more sustainable economy. We will do this through the further development and application of the Green Economy Masterplanning (GEM) tool. Supported by the WLGA this systematic approach:

- Provides a means of base-lining current activity.
- Provides an opportunity to review and set future priorities.
- Can be used to develop measurements, targets and suitable Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

Three year Economy and Enterprise Delivery Plan

The successful implementation of programmes and projects identified within the Delivery Plan will play a major part in delivering the strategic objectives. The delivery will also be dependant upon partnership working across the private, public and third sectors. It is recognised that some delivery is also dependant on the resolution of a number of detailed project considerations most noticeably external funding.



It is recognised that within the first three years the following work areas will be the priorities to be delivered by the Torfaen Economy and Enterprise partnership. They are:

1. Inward Investment and Marketing

The creation of a new vibrant brand that reflects the core objectives of the strategy must be created and promoted to its target audiences to ensure that it becomes the first contact for business within Torfaen. A new web presence is vital to achieve this aim and this will be at the cutting edge of current technology and maintained at this level to create interest locally, nationally and internationally. Inward investment promotion packs will also be created to complement and support the web site.

Inward investment is a vital component of creating new jobs within the area and by attracting businesses from key sectors, is a way of shaping our economy. The Springboard Business Innovation Centre~Wales has been successful in creating opportunities for knowledge based/digital businesses to locate to Torfaen and it is hoped to use this foundation to create a digital business cluster around Llantarnam Park and developing it throughout the county borough through exploiting opportunities expected to be created by SRS in the north of the county borough.

2. Training and Skills for Work

With the targeted change in the Torfaen economic landscape e.g. green energy and digital businesses, it is essential that the skills of the local workforce move further towards the needs of future employers. Working with Torfaen Training, local training providers and employers matching training to business requirements will be vital to ensure that the local economy flourishes. The possibility of creating apprenticeships will also be investigated to provide opportunities for Torfaen citizens. The successful delivery of the extensive range of employability, skills and training programmes needs to continue whilst working toward new job creation programmes for 2014 onwards.

3. Young Enterprise

Establish Young Enterprise within Torfaen comprehensive schools. It is imperative that new entrepreneurs and businesses are created for the future of the economy. This also can be linked to regeneration projects such as creating pop up retail in Blaenavon and outlets in Pontypool Indoor Market for local schools. Knowledge and digital student projects can benefit from links with the Springboard Business Innovation Centre~Wales and its businesses.

4. Enterprise Facilitator/Taste of Enterprise

We need to ensure the right environment is created to turn new ideas into new businesses. This Enterprise Facilitation approach will help put teams of individuals together to create businesses and provide a sheltered environment for test trading to establish the need for the businesses. The Enterprise Facilitator project will be delivered in partnership with the Sirolli Institute and is aimed at working within communities to find business ideas. The Taste of Enterprise test trading facility will be delivered in partnership with the Centre for Business and based within Pontypool.

5. Business Support/Development

The current businesses within Torfaen are an important part of future economic growth and so the required support and development is an essential part of the new Economy and Enterprise product. The approach will be to create/build upon relationships with businesses within Torfaen and 'bespoke solutions' that match the needs of the business such as training requirements, business planning, marketing, intellectual property and financial support. EU funding opportunities will be utilised to underpin this approach.

6. Business Growth

By continuing to help businesses grow and expand, not only does it lead to extra employment opportunities but it enables businesses to carry out research and development to put them at the leading edge in product design and continue to evolve the business. The growth of businesses will be encouraged by establishing business account relationships with the enterprises. Support will be provided to source funding packages needed to expand, diversify and export.

7. Digital Strategy

Technology has a massive impact upon people and the way business is conducted both locally and on a global scale. Torfaen needs to provide the infrastructure and skills for its citizens to be at the fore front of this technology so that they can continue to prosper in both their home life and commercial activities, either through employment or business.

8. SEWDERB Partnership

This is a regional board from across the proposed new City Region that has ten thematic groups looking at the complex economic & delivery challenges that need to be addressed to establish a prosperous economy in south east Wales. Over the next three years SEWDERB will look to develop a programme of works, to be funded in the main by EU and Welsh Government to help the City Region flourish as a vibrant economy. Torfaen County Borough Council officers and partners will play a key role in the development of these future programmes for delivery post 2014. Internally, Torfaen County Borough Council has established a Post 2013 EU Programmes Group attended by officers sitting on the ten regional thematic groups to encourage integration between themes – wherever relevant and possible both in Torfaen and across the region.

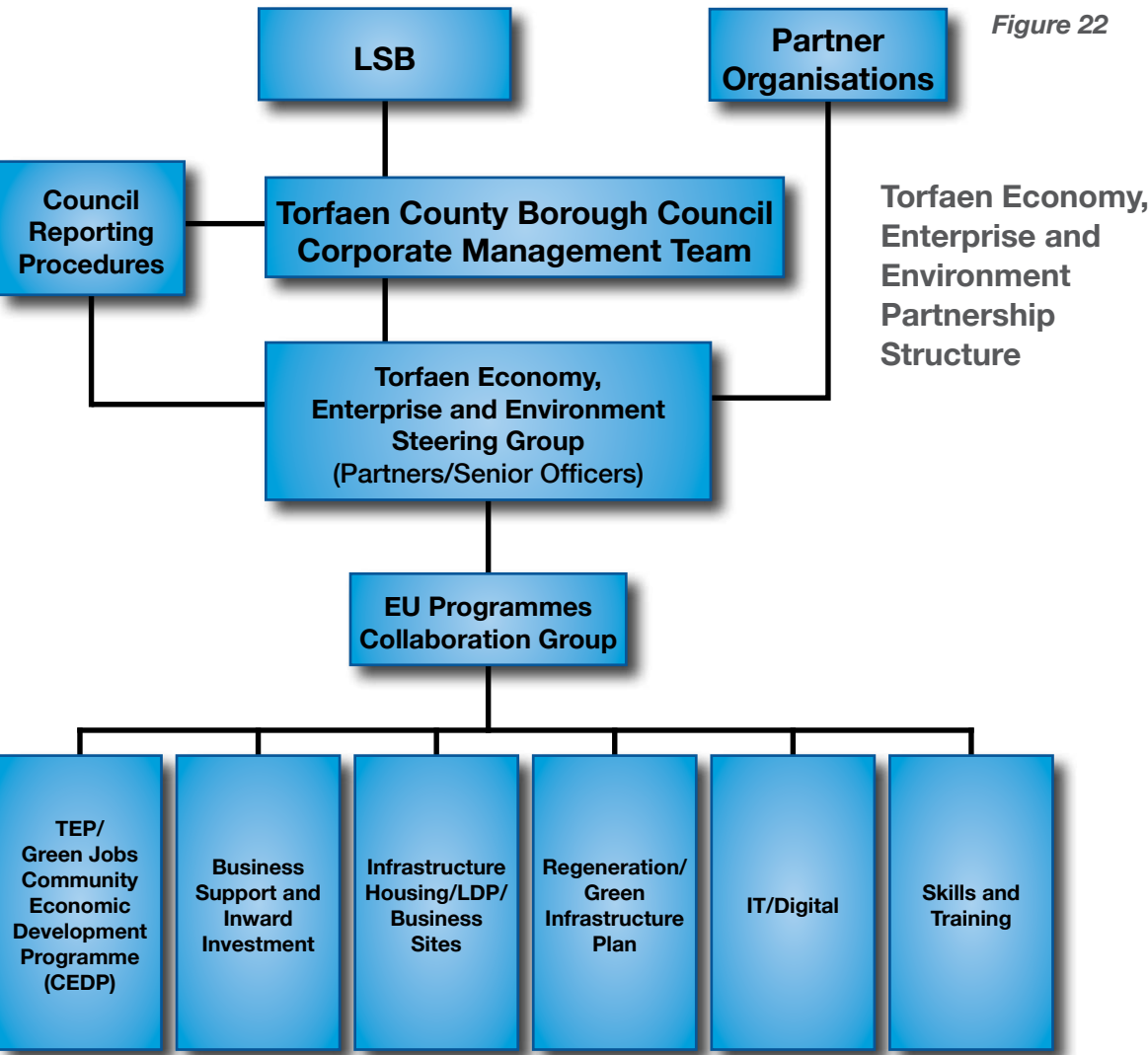


11. Control and Monitoring

The delivery plan is key to the success of this strategy and it is important that performance is monitored against key milestones and outputs in its implementation. The proposed Steering Group will plan, coordinate and record activity and progress. Torfaen County Borough Council will provide the administration for these meetings.

- Steering Group will meet on a 6-monthly basis to agree work programmes and activities to monitor performance against agreed targets
- Group will feed back where required
- Group will be made up of private and public sector individuals
- Group will act as a critical friend
- The Terms of Reference for the group will be agreed on formation
- Membership of the Group will be made up of representatives from private, public and third sectors, housing, education, green and communities

Monitoring and reporting of progress will be provided to each partner's own Organisation Boards by their Steering Group representative. (Shown below)



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Glossary

Business in Wales	BiW
Community Economic Development Programme	CEDP
Community Infrastructure Levy	CIL
Carbon Dioxide	CO ₂
Centre for Regeneration Excellence Wales	CREW
Core Subject Indicator	CSI
Economy, Science and Transport	EST
European Union	EU
Further Education	FE
Full Time Equivalent	FTE
Gross Domestic Product	GDP
Green Economy Masterplanning	GEM
Her Majesty's Stationery Office	HMSO
Information and Communication Technology	ICT
Information Technology	IT
Job Seekers Allowance	JSA
Key Performance Indicator	KPI
Local Authority	LA
Local Development Plan	LDP
Local Service Board	LSB
Rural Development Programme	RDP
Registered Social Landlords	RSLs
South East Wales Directors of Environment and Regeneration Board	SEWDERB
South East Wales Economic Forum Board	SEWEF
Standard Industrial Classification	SIC
Single Integrated Plan	SIP
Strategic Objectives	SO
South Wales Collaboration Centre Shared Resource Service	SRS
Torfaen County Borough Council	TCBC
Torfaen Energy Partnership	TEP
Torfaen Voluntary Alliance	TVA
United Kingdom	UK
Value Added Tax	VAT
Wales Infrastructure and Investment Plan	WIIP
Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation	WIMD
Welsh Local Government Association	WLGA
Working Skills for Adults	WSfA
Wisdom, Wealth and Wellbeing	WWW



Economy & Enterprise
Torfaen ~ inspiring business innovation

Economi a Mentergarwch
Torfaen ~ hybu arloesi mewn busnes

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