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To: [NDF](#)
Subject: NDF consultation response: Cardiff Council Liberal Democrat group
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NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK CONSULTATION RESPONSE LIBERAL DEMOCRAT GROUP, CARDIFF COUNCIL

This is the response of the Liberal Democrat group on Cardiff Council to the Welsh Government's NDF framework consultation.

We welcome the high level statement contained within the framework, though are concerned that many of the assertions contained within it currently lack sufficient evidence.

We are also concerned that the eleven outcomes are parochial. There is nothing in those outcomes that places Wales' development within a wider UK, European and global context. This is short-sighted and risks turning a welcome increase in devolved powers into an exercise in insularity. Wales' future is dependent, in particular, on maintaining strong cultural, economic and political links with the rest of the UK.

The need to work beyond our boundaries is critical in a number of areas, not least housing. We believe regional solutions must be sought for our housing crisis and believe that such an approach must be at the heart of the final version of this framework. The notion that local authorities can work in isolation to deal with housing is unrealistic, but especially so for Cardiff which is starting to buckle under the weight of housing development to the north of the city.

We note the initial response from the Cardiff Council Labour administration, contained in their cabinet report of 10th October 2019. It is right that local politicians and administrations should fight their own corner, but we believe we have a responsibility to act in a way that avoids entrenching local advantage. The framework's concern about the environmental sustainability of Cardiff's current growth is one we share. The accumulation of cultural, commercial and leisure opportunities in the geographical south of the city, while residential development amasses to the north, is generating intolerable strains on the city's highways infrastructure and green space. It is for this reason that we place so much emphasis on regional housing solutions: spreading development will improve congestion, which is reaching levels in Cardiff that threaten residents' health and well-being and which, last year, rose at the fastest rate of all UK core cities. Cardiff Council's current approach also risks developing satellite residential enclaves to the north, isolated from the cultural, commercial and leisure opportunities that are focussed predominantly in the city centre and Bay area.

We also note the Cardiff Labour administration's defensive, indeed aggressive, response to the suggestion that Newport be the focus of economic development. Again, it is understandable if local politicians make the case for their narrow local interests. It certainly makes sense to cluster industries where there is a clear and emerging specialism and Cardiff has a number of such industries, for example in media and professional services, that should be nurtured. However, as our turbulent political times demonstrate, the accumulation or hoarding of wealth is contributing to an increasingly unfair society, wider civic disaffection and disengagement from the political process.

As Liberal Democrats, we are instinctively suspicious when the powerful seek to hoard that power and support plans that address this imbalance.

However, we would expect a greater level of statistical evidence to justify the claims made in the framework. Otherwise, there is a risk that breezy assertions will lead to policy that is unevidenced, liable to contest and undeliverable.

Submitted on behalf of the Cardiff Liberal Democrat group on Cardiff Council.

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