

Meeting of:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	Monday, 25 October 2021
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	Corporate Performance and Resources Environment and Regeneration
Report Title:	Project Zero – Delivering the Climate Change Challenge Plan
Purpose of Report:	To make Cabinet aware of progress being made to develop the Council’s approach to delivering the Project Zero, Climate Change Challenge Plan.
Report Owner:	Executive Leader and Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources
Responsible Officer:	Rob Thomas, Managing Director
Elected Member and Officer Consultation:	Due to the corporate nature of this report, no specific Ward Member consultation has been undertaken
Policy Framework:	This is a matter for decision by Cabinet
<p>Executive Summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The report details the proposed governance arrangements for Project Zero. • As part of these governance arrangements a Project Zero Board has been established to take forward the Climate Change Challenge Plan and an initial project plan has been developed. • The Board has met and considered the challenges and associated steps detailed in the Plan and the Senior Reporting Officers have been tasked with developing the necessary arrangements to progress their areas of responsibility. Timeframes and approaches will vary but the Board will meet every two months to consider progress. • The Board will ensure that work undertaken as part of Project Zero aligns to the response to the nature emergency declared by Council in July 2021. 	

Recommendations

1. That Cabinet approves the governance arrangements for Project Zero (Appendix A).
2. That Cabinet endorses the Project Brief for Project Zero (Appendix B).
3. That Cabinet considers the way forward for the delivery of Project Zero as proposed by the Project Board as described in the body of this report.
4. That Cabinet notes that the Project Board will ensure alignment with activities undertaken as part of the response to the nature emergency declared by Council in July 2021.
5. That Cabinet refers this report to Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee and Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee for their consideration.
6. That Cabinet endorses the proposal that this report is distributed to all elected Members for their information.

Reasons for Recommendations

1. To enable Cabinet to consider and approve the governance arrangements for Project Zero.
2. To enable Cabinet to consider and approve the Project Brief for Project Zero.
3. To enable Cabinet to consider and approve the way forward proposed by the Project Zero Board.
4. To confirm and ensure that the work on climate change and the nature emergency will be aligned.
5. To enable Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee and the Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee to consider how Project Zero is being taken forward.
6. To update all elected Members on the arrangements in place to deliver Project Zero.

1. Background

- 1.1** At the Council meeting on the 29th July 2019 Council resolved (minute 209 refers):

- (1) T H A T the Vale of Glamorgan Council join with Welsh Government and other Councils across the UK in declaring a global 'climate emergency' in response to the findings of the IPCC report.
- (2) T H A T the Vale of Glamorgan Council reduce its own carbon emissions to net zero before the Welsh Government target of 2030 and support the implementation of the Welsh Government's new Low Carbon Delivery

Plan, to help achieve the Welsh Government's ambition for the public sector in Wales to be carbon neutral.

- (3) T H A T the Vale of Glamorgan Council make representations to the Welsh and UK Governments, as appropriate, to provide the necessary powers, resources and technical support to Local Authorities in Wales to help them successfully meet the 2030 target.
- (4) T H A T the Vale of Glamorgan Council continue to work with partners across the region to develop and implement best practice methods that can deliver carbon reductions and help limit global warming.
- (5) T H A T the Vale of Glamorgan Council work with local stakeholders including Councillors, residents, young people, businesses, and other relevant parties to develop a strategy in line with a target of net zero emissions by 2030 and explore ways to maximise local benefits of these actions in other sectors such as employment, health, agriculture, transport and the economy.

- 1.2** Project Zero is the Council's response to the climate emergency. It brings together work already being undertaken and policies, strategies and plans already in place. It sets out the challenges we face and proposed activities to meet these challenges. It recognises the importance of working as a team across the Vale and that everyone has a role to play and a responsibility to think about our legacy for future generations.
- 1.3** Due to urgent work on Covid-19 and the need to focus on the Council's response to the pandemic, it was not possible to progress the development of a climate change plan as rapidly as originally envisaged although work continued across the Council and progress was reported to Cabinet and Scrutiny Committees.
- 1.4** At the Council meeting on the 26th July 2021 Council approved the Climate Change Challenge Plan (minute 296). The Plan details eighteen challenges framed around the need to demonstrate strong leadership, fulfil our responsibility to current and future generations and to make a difference now.
- 1.5** The Challenge Plan reflects commitments in the Council's Corporate Plan 2020-25 which sets out the Council's four Well-being Objectives and how they will be delivered. The Corporate Plan includes a commitment to work to reduce the organisation's carbon emissions to net zero by 2030 and to encourage others to follow the Council's lead as part of minimising the negative impact of our activities on the environment. The Corporate Plan is supported each year by an Annual Delivery Plan (ADP). The ADP for 2021-22 includes a number of activities that will contribute to work to tackle climate change and work has already begun to draft the ADP 22-23 ensuring it encompasses the commitments in the Climate Change Challenge Plan as a key area of focus for all of the Council's service areas.
- 1.6** At the Council meeting in July a motion was passed resolving to declare a Nature Emergency (Minute 289 refers) as follows:

- 1) Declare a nature emergency, in response to the findings of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and National Biodiversity Network (NBN) reports and in recognition of the inextricable link between climate change and the loss of biodiversity.
- 2) Place biodiversity alongside climate change at the heart of decision making in the Vale of Glamorgan Council.
- 3) Welcome Welsh Government's support for the Convention on Biological Diversity post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework.
- 4) Engage with the anticipated Global Biodiversity Framework with clear goals and targets, following the convention in October, with an aim of achieving no net loss of biodiversity.
- 5) Make representations to the Welsh and UK Governments, as appropriate, to provide the necessary powers, resources and technical support to local authorities in Wales to help them successfully achieve this aim.
- 6) Continue to work with partners across the county, region and nationally to develop and implement best practice methods that can protect Wales' biodiversity.
- 7) Work with local stakeholders including Councillors, residents, young people, businesses and other relevant parties, to develop a strategy aligned with Project Zero with a target of no net loss of biodiversity that will also explore ways to maximise the local benefits of these actions in other sectors such as employment, health, agriculture, transport and the economy.

2. Key Issues for Consideration

Project Zero

- 2.1 Project Zero sets out the Council's commitment to reduce its own carbon emissions to net zero by 2030, but the ambition of Project Zero is wider than just reducing the Council's carbon emissions. It recognises the Council's role as a community leader and how through its policies and actions it can work with, support and influence others to make changes and consider their impact on the environment. Project Zero and the developing response to the nature emergency are therefore closely aligned.
- 2.2 An effective response to the climate emergency and the nature emergency requires a co-ordinated and integrated approach across the Council and robust arrangements for working in partnership with the community and a range of organisations, including the Public Services Board, Town and Community Councils, community organisations and the private sector.

- 2.3** The approved Challenge Plan contains 18 challenges which are grouped under the following three themes reflecting the importance of community leadership, influencing and supporting others to make changes and changing how we work.
- *Demonstrate Strong Leadership* – this includes challenges around engagement, communication, developing our evidence base and how we influence others.
 - *Fulfil our responsibility to current and future generations* – this includes challenges around transport, planning, the economy, energy, natural resources, food and waste.
 - *Make a difference* – this includes challenges around how the Council manages its assets including schools and housing and how we operate as an organisation.
- 2.4** The Challenge Plan also emphasises that the Council has a range of plans, policies and strategies already in place that detail how particular services will be developed and delivered.
- 2.5** Detailed below are some of the key Council strategies, policies and plans that will have a critical role in the Council’s work to adapt to and to mitigate the impact of climate change. These plans and strategies will shape how the Council acts but will also inform and influence the behaviour and actions of others. As new plans are developed, and existing plans reviewed and revised, they will increasingly reflect the integrated approach being taken to tackle climate change and, where relevant, the nature emergency.
- Corporate Plan 2020-25 ‘Working Together for a Brighter Future’
 - Annual Delivery Plan
 - HR Strategy
 - COVID-19 Recovery Strategy
 - Reshaping Strategy & Programme
 - Corporate Asset Management Plan
 - Carbon Management Plan
 - Digital Strategy
 - Income Generation & Commercial Opportunities Strategy
 - Procurement Policy and Strategy
 - 21st Century Schools Programme
 - Economic Growth Strategy (in development)
 - Investment Strategy (in development)
 - Local Housing Strategy
 - Local Transport Plan (LTP) 2015-30
 - Active Travel projects
 - Local Development Plan 2011-26
 - LDP review – 21-25 and subsequent plan

- Relevant Supplementary Planning Guidance
- Green Infrastructure Strategy (in development)
- Biodiversity Forward Plan
- Flood Risk Management Strategy
- Shoreline Management Plan

2.6 Project Zero and the Climate Change Challenge Plan do not replace the Council's statutory plans and other statutory responsibilities. They articulate the Council's commitment to doing more to understand the challenge of climate change and to taking action to influence others and encourage change across a number of areas including planning, energy, transport, food, green spaces and procurement. The Council will continue to show leadership, meet its statutory obligations and use its influence to improve wellbeing and consider the needs of future generations. Decisions will need to be taken within the context of these statutory obligations, duties and the financial context within which the Council operates. It is fundamental that the Council's approach to the climate and nature emergencies has full regard to and operates alongside our other statutory responsibilities

Project Zero Governance & Delivery Arrangements

2.7 Governance arrangements have been developed to ensure the effective delivery of Project Zero. These arrangements are illustrated in Appendix A. In recognition of the importance of Project Zero and that it forms part of the portfolio of projects to be progressed via the Council's transformation programme, delivery will be overseen by the Council's Reshaping Board which includes Cabinet and the Strategic Leadership Team.

2.8 The implementation of Project Zero has been designed to reflect the new focus for the Reshaping Programme as Reshaping with:

- Our community
- Our work
- Our resources

2.9 Success will require us to challenge how we work with the community and our partners and how we empower the community to take projects and ideas forward. We will need to embrace new ways of working and new technology, building on work already underway around renewables, digital transformation and electric/low carbon vehicles. We will need to consider how we use our resources, our people and our assets and plan for the long term. All the elements of the Reshaping programme form part of what we need to do to tackle climate change, for example, regenerating our town centres, encouraging healthy lifestyles and wellbeing, tackling food poverty and adapting where and how we work. The Reshaping Programme's enabling activities (such as HR/organisational development, digital and engagement/communications) will be vital aspects to the successful delivery of the project.

- 2.10** A new Project Zero Board has been established to provide operational oversight for the delivery of Project Zero. The Board is chaired by the Managing Director and reports to the Reshaping Board. The eighteen challenges contained in the Challenge Plan have each been assigned to a Senior Reporting Officer (SRO). The SROs will be supported by specialist officers within the Council and a Project Support Team who will lead on a number of cross cutting themes essential to the success of Project Zero. These include communications, organisational development and training, and data collection and analysis. Details of the Project Board and support arrangements are included in the Project Brief (Appendix B). The Project Brief also details the initial steps necessary to support the delivery of the Plan and to ensure a co-ordinated approach to Project Zero including how progress will be reported.
- 2.11** This report references above the Council's many different strategies, policies and plans. Part of the role of the Project Zero Board is to ensure that there is a consistent and ambitious approach to tackling climate change across the Council's diverse range of activities.
- 2.12** The Council's Insight Board will also have a critical role in shaping work, making connections and identifying opportunities. In addition, and as necessary, challenge teams and workshops will be created to generate new ideas, progress specific activities and to provide internal and external challenge to the board.
- 2.13** Effective engagement across the Council and with partners will remain critical to the success of Project Zero. The Council will continue to work through the Public Services Board to deliver the commitments in the PSB Climate Emergency Charter.
- 2.14** At the first meeting of the Project Zero Board members of the board discussed how they would be taking forward their areas of responsibility. The Board also considered the commitments in the plan from the perspective of what could be achieved most quickly and where delivery arrangements are already in place or can be easily put in place or resourced. Board members also considered which actions were more complex and required more consideration in terms of resourcing and development. The Board also discussed which actions would have the biggest impact and would deliver our ambition.
- 2.15** The Board concluded that there were significant opportunities to reduce our emissions through changing procurement practices, innovative energy projects, investment in housing, the 21st Century Programme for Schools, encouraging cycling and use of electric vehicles. Members of the Board will now work at pace to explore what action can be taken in these areas and the potential impact changes could have. In addition, the Board recognised the need to reflect on the findings of the carbon emissions report to be submitted to Welsh Government on the 31st October and how the Council can further develop expertise, capacity and knowledge in this area. The next meeting of the Board will seek to prioritise

action and assign resources to this work so as to ensure maximum impact can be delivered.

- 2.16** The importance of aligning work with the nature emergency was discussed and an exercise is underway to map what activities are being undertaken and where there are gaps. This work will be reported to Cabinet later in the year with an update on the development of the Green Infrastructure Plan.
- 2.17** SROs will now develop specific plans of work to deliver the steps set out in the Challenge Plan for their area of responsibility.

Developing our Baseline and Measuring Progress

- 2.18** Progress made in delivering the Plan will be regularly reported to Cabinet. The Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee and the Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee will both have a role in scrutinising progress in meeting the challenges to tackle climate change and deliver Project Zero.
- 2.19** As part of the consultation on the draft Climate Change Challenge Plan questions were raised about how we would know if we have met our targets. Using existing, relevant indicators as a starting point, a suite of indicators will be developed to demonstrate progress and the difference we are making. The information gained from completing the data requirements for Welsh Government will also contribute to the development of our baseline and greater insight into our carbon emissions. In addition, the PSB is currently undertaking a Wellbeing Assessment (WBA) to be published in 2022. The WBA must consider economic, social, cultural and environmental wellbeing and this will include a range of data and analysis to inform the work of the PSB and will also assist in the evidence base for Project Zero.

Ongoing Engagement

- 2.20** The Plan includes a commitment to continue to engage on this topic and to work with the community to respond effectively to the climate emergency.
- 2.21** Officers are keen, for example, to continue working with the Youth Service to engage young people in the work of the Council and with the PSB to tackle climate change. The recent decision of Cabinet to modify the approach to Youth engagement will assist in this regard.
- 2.22** A number of community groups have also contacted the Council through the Project Zero e-mailbox asking for information and whether officers can attend meetings. Work will be undertaken to strengthen links with community groups, to develop a green ambassadors' model and to build on the energy, knowledge and expertise within our communities. Green ambassadors could be new or existing groups and will be an important part of how we engage with the community and how the community can get involved in shaping championing

and delivering project zero. This work will underpin work across all areas of Project Zero and will also connect to work around nature recovery. This engagement is fundamental to the success of the strategy.

- 2.23** As part of our work within the Public Services Board (PSB) meetings have been arranged between PSB partners and Town and Community Councils to discuss how we can work together on a number of issues including the Local Places for Nature funding and climate change.
- 2.24** Work will also commence to develop the Project Zero web pages which will provide a resource base for the work on climate change. It is the intention that the Challenge Plan is a dynamic document and that the web pages include details of progress, case studies, links to relevant plans and strategies and research and evidence that will inform Project Zero.

3. How do proposals evidence the Five Ways of Working and contribute to our Well-being Objectives?

- 3.1** The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 is about sustainable development. The Act sets out a 'sustainable development principle' which specifies that the public bodies listed in the Act must act in a manner which seeks to ensure the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. In meeting their sustainability duty, each body must set objectives that highlight the work the body will undertake to contribute to meeting the seven Well-being Goals for Wales.
- 3.2** The activities set out in this report will contribute to the national well-being goals and help ensure we have a resilient Wales The five ways of working will be embedded throughout Project Zero as we will be working collaboratively through the PSB and with other partners. It is recognised that this is a long-term project, but that action needs to be taken now and that prevention will be critical element to this work. Involvement of the community in order for them to shape our activities and to understand the need for change will be fundamental to us making a difference through our activities and we will be integrating work on this agenda across the Council ensuring this is seen as the responsibility of all Directorates and staff.

4. Resources and Legal Considerations

Financial

- 4.1** Project Zero encompasses a wide range of activity and will be delivered from existing resources and the fund established from reserves to support work on climate change. We will continue to seek additional funding including grant funding to support our activities and the ambitions of Project Zero.

Employment

- 4.2 There are no specific employment implications arising as a direct result of this report.

Legal (Including Equalities)

- 4.3 There are no direct legal implications arising from the activities detailed within this report, but activities undertaken in response to the climate change emergency will be consistent with duties under the Environment Act and the Well-being of Future Generations Act.
- 4.4 The feedback gathered during the consultation on the draft plan has informed Project Zero and equality impact assessments will be undertaken for different activities within Project Zero as necessary. These assessments will reflect the consultation findings and other relevant engagement and data.

5. Background Papers

Council Notice of Motion 29 July 2019 - Minute 209

<https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/Committee%20Reports/Council/2019/19-07-29/Minutes.pdf>

Cabinet Report 23 March 2020 Minute C280 - Responding to the Climate Emergency

<https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/Committee%20Reports/Cabinet/2020/20-03-23/Minutes.pdf>

Vale of Glamorgan Council Corporate Plan April 2020

https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/our_council/achieving_our_vision/Corporate-Plan.aspx

Vale of Glamorgan Council Coronavirus Recovery Strategy Cabinet 21st September 2020

<https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/Committee%20Reports/Cabinet/2020/20-09-21/Coronavirus-Recovery-Strategy.pdf>

Cabinet Report 2nd November 2020 Minute C357 - Developing a Climate Change Action Plan

<https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/Committee%20Reports/Cabinet/2020/20-11-02/Minutes.pdf>

Cabinet Report 25 January 2021 Minute C451 – Vale Public Services Board Climate Emergency Charter

[https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/ Committee%20Reports/Cabinet/2021/21-01-25/Minutes.pdf](https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/Committee%20Reports/Cabinet/2021/21-01-25/Minutes.pdf)

Cabinet Report 22 March 2021 Minute C526 – Project Zero - Draft Climate Change Challenge Plan

[https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/ Committee%20Reports/Cabinet/2021/21-03-22/Minutes-of-21-03-22.pdf](https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/Committee%20Reports/Cabinet/2021/21-03-22/Minutes-of-21-03-22.pdf)

Welsh Government - Welsh Sector net zero reporting guide 24th May 2021.

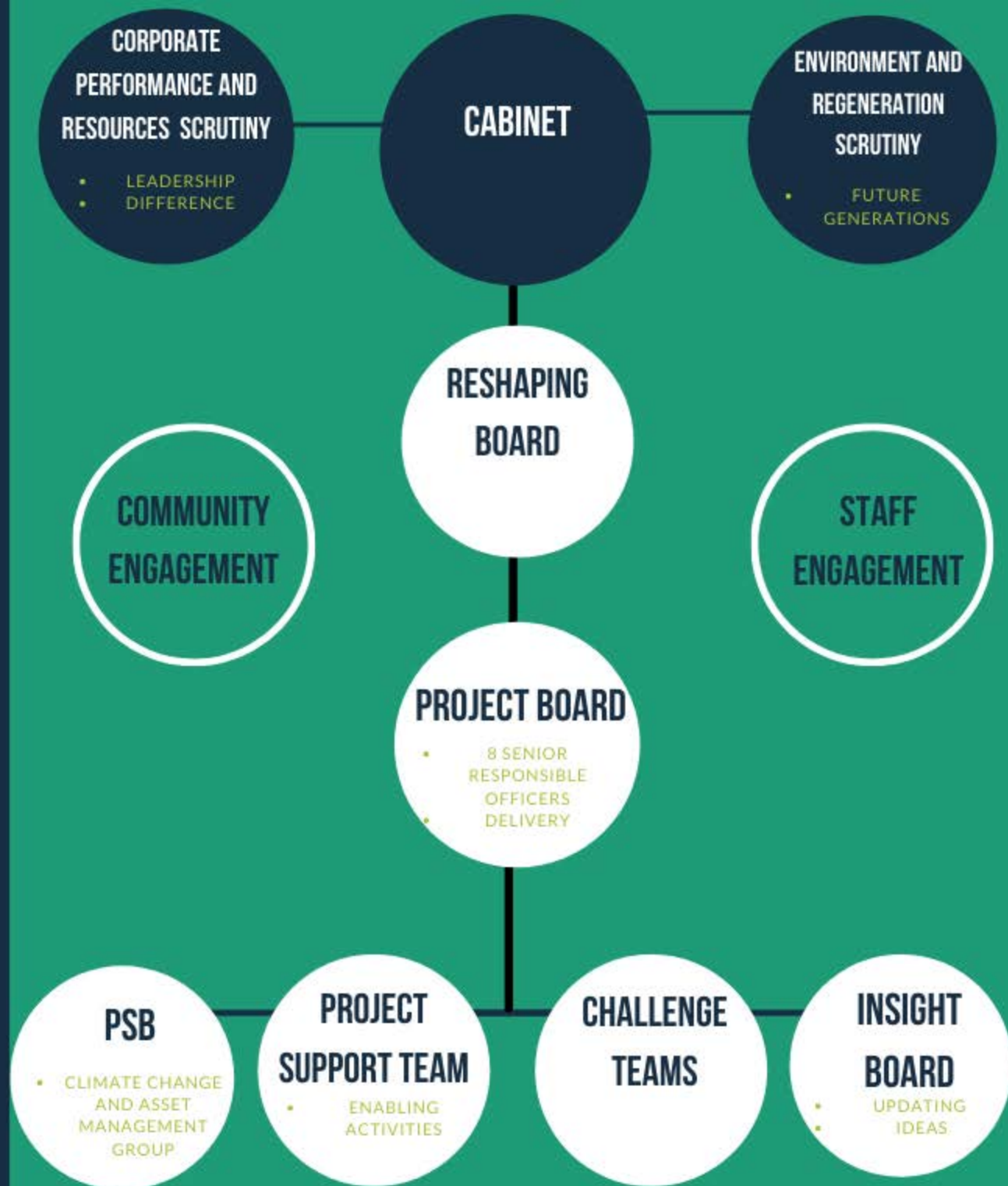
https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2021-05/welsh-public-sector-net-zero-reporting-guide_1.pdf

Council Minutes 26th July 2021 (289 and 296) - Notice of Motion – Declaration of Nature Emergency and Project Zero – Draft Climate Change Challenge Plan

[https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/ Committee%20Reports/Council/2021/21-07-26/Minutes.pdf](https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/Committee%20Reports/Council/2021/21-07-26/Minutes.pdf)

Project Zero Governance

PROJECTZERO@VALEOFGLAMORGAN.GOV.UK



7	Initiation	Project Plan	
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Overview

Project Title	Project Zero – Responding to the Climate Emergency		
Project Sponsor	Rob Thomas – Managing Director		
Project Manager	Helen Moses – Strategy and Partnership Manager		
Project Board of Senior Reporting Officers for the 18 challenges (bi-monthly meetings)	Rob Thomas (Chair)	Influence and Ambition	
	Head of Finance	Procurement	
	Tom Bowring	Communication, engagement, insight, food	
	Marcus Goldsworthy	Planning and Regen, Economy, green/biodiversity	
	Lorna Cross	Property/assets, energy	
	Emma Reed	Flooding, transport, staff travel inc fleet, waste	
	Mike Ingram	Housing	
	Trevor Baker	Schools and IT	
Project Support Team – enabling activities (monthly meetings)	Hawys Davies	Communications Programme	
	Hawys Davies/Web Editor	Website development	
	Lloyd Davies	OD/Training	
	Gemma Jones	Finance	
	Ben Winstanley	Data and evidence	
	Lloyd Fisher	Data and evidence	
	Tom Bowring (Chair)	Policy and Governance	
	Helen Moses	Policy and governance	
Specialist Skills	Colin Cheeseman	Biodiversity and nature	
	Colin Smith	Waste	
	Vicky Robinson	Planning	
	Clive Moon	Flooding	
	Andrew Freegard	Housing	
	Phil Chappell	Funding/economy/rural/countryside	
	Kyle Phillips	Transport	
	Martin Dacey	Youth Service	

Action/Task	Officer(s) Responsible	Start Date	End Date	Resources
Governance				
Produce a governance diagram inc.	Helen Moses	Sept	Sept	Existing

links to reshaping board, Insight, Cabinet and Scrutiny				
Board terms of reference and schedule of meetings	Helen Moses	Sept	Oct	Existing
Develop a progress reporting framework and indicators e.g. regular updates on website, case studies and an Annual Report and review.	Helen Moses	Nov	Dec	Existing
Organise first meeting of the Project Board of SROs – workshop discussion	Helen Moses	Sept	Oct	Existing
Delivery				
Understand links to nature emergency and how activities can align	Tom Bowring/Marcus Goldsworthy	Aug	Sept	Existing
Prioritise list of activity/challenge inc links to ADP – through initial board meeting and subsequent discussion of the ‘how, now, wow’ paper	Tom Bowring	Oct	Nov	Existing
Consider use of the reserves to support delivery of the Plan	Board	Oct	Dec	Reserves
Training				
Training needs analysis (staff and members) and develop/ commission training as necessary	OD lead			Reserves
Insight/Evidence				
Report carbon data to WG	Ben Winstanley	July	Oct	Existing
Consider if we need to commission consultant support e.g. around data/footprint (£60k bid submitted to the Community Renewal Fund)	Tom Bowring/ Head of Finance			Reserves/Community Renewal Fund
Communications and Engagement				
Develop the Project Zero website – initial improvements https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/living/Climate-Change/Project-Zero.aspx	Comms Lead	Oct	Dec	Existing
Develop a Project Zero Communications programme to cover <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Public • TCCs 	Comms Lead	Oct	Dec	Existing

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools e.g. Barry Island approach, youth councils • Partners/PSB • Community groups e.g. Wenvoe, Penarth groups • Youth Service • Business 				

Documentation Sign-Off			
	Name	Designation	Date
Completed by:	Helen Moses	Strategy and Partnership Manager	26/8/21
Approved by:	Senior Leadership Team		2/9/21