

THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL

CABINET: 3RD OCTOBER, 2022

REFERENCE FROM GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE: 24TH OCTOBER, 2022

“ FINAL DRAFT VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL ANNUAL SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT 2021/22 (REF) –

The reference from Cabinet of 20th October, 2022 was presented to Committee by the Director of Corporate Resources.

The Final Draft Vale of Glamorgan Annual Self-Assessment (Appendix A) was a position statement on the Council's performance over the past year in delivering its Annual Delivery Plan priorities as aligned to the Corporate Plan Well-being Objectives. It was intended to provide an honest and balanced account of the Council's achievements and challenges and identify areas where further progress was required. The information contained within the Final Draft Vale of Glamorgan Annual Self-Assessment report would be used to inform the development of the Council's Annual Delivery Plan for 2023/24 and associated Service Plans for the same period.

The report outlined that a summary of the consultation findings (appended at Appendix B) presented a mixed picture. When asked whether the Council had achieved the objectives that had been set in the previous year, public respondents generally responded more positively to the themes of, 'Providing Care and Support' and 'Improving infrastructure'. They were least positive about 'Responding to the Climate Change Challenge – Project Zero' and the 'Cost-of-Living Crisis'. Council staff respondents were most positive about 'Providing Care and Support' with 'Project Zero' and 'Involving our Communities' receiving the least positive responses.

The consultation received 125 individual responses to the survey, and whilst around 2.5k people looked at the social media communications and animations, the Council received 30 comments across the various animations. A further 20 responses were received from Council staff. Despite the low response rate, a summary of all respondent's views provided the Council with a snapshot of stakeholder views and give an insight which would assist to shape next year's (2023/24) Annual Delivery Plan priorities and associated Service Plans.

It was reported that from the public survey analysis there was a general lack of awareness and understanding of what the Council did and that more needed to be done to communicate information in a way that was easier for people to understand so they were encouraged to participate in engagement activities. In addition, Council colleagues would benefit from regular communication about Council performance overall. These issues were being progressed through the Council's new Public Participation Strategy.

Councillor M. Hooper commented that it appeared that amendments requested at the previous meeting of the Governance and Audit Committee had not been made, which related to page 9 and clarifying that the outcome of a £14.03m bid for Barry Docks. In reply, the Director advised that a revised set of wording had been agreed but somehow not incorporated. Therefore, Cabinet would be asked to agree a revision to page 9 outlining that the Council would not know if it had been successful in securing nearly £19.9m to transform Barry Docks waterfront until the Autumn of 2022.

Councillor Hooper also commented on the way that the Council communicated to the public and particularly their interest in the report. He urged caution and not to assume that there was a miscommunication problem, especially when people raised issues that they believed to be true. This was something that the Council could reflect on for the future.

Councillor E. Goodjohn referred to the consultation document at Appendix B, which outlined that only 125 responses from the public were received, in addition to 20 responses from members of staff. Councillor Goodjohn queried whether it was felt that represented a true and accurate record of the views of staff and the public. In reply, the Director stated that the response rate was higher than it had been in previous years for similar exercises, but it was recognised that it was low when compared to the overall population of the Vale of Glamorgan. The challenge was that the Council was trying to consult on a document that was wide ranging, and which covered all the work and activities undertaken. Therefore, it was difficult for people to respond to a corporate consultation which was a different process to consultation on very specific issues that people felt were more relevant to them. Overall, what would be more important was the ongoing consultation and engagement that would be undertaken throughout the year on specific areas that people wanted to participate in. This would be a more representative nature of consultation, which may include a public opinion survey.

Committee members echoed comments relating to people feeling that their views had been valued and taken on board, which was something that the Council could reflect on further.

Subsequently the Committee

RESOLVED –

- (1) T H A T the Final Draft Vale of Glamorgan Annual Self-Assessment be endorsed, subject to the typographical changes to Page 9.
- (2) T H A T Cabinet be requested to accept the typographical changes to Page 9.
- (3) T H A T Cabinet refer the report on to Full Council (9th November, 2022) for final approval.

Reasons for decisions

- (1) Having regard to the contents of the report and discussions at the meeting.
- (2) To request Cabinet to approve the typographical changes on page 9.
- (3) So that the Final Self-Assessment can be approved by Full Council at the meeting scheduled for 9th November, 2022.”