

## CABINET

Minutes of a Remote meeting held on 6th July, 2023.

The Committee agenda is available [here](#).

The Meeting recording is available [here](#).

Present: Councillor L. Burnett (Chair); Councillors R.M. Birch, B.E. Brooks, G. John, S. Sivagnanam, E. Williams and M.R. Wilson.

Also Present: Councillors C.P. Franks, E. Goodjohn, H.C. Hamilton and Dr. I.J Johnson.

### **C36 ANNOUNCEMENT –**

The Leader welcomed all parties to the Cabinet meeting and reminded everyone present that the meeting was being Live Streamed as well as recorded via the internet and this recording archived for future viewing.

She asked if all participants please 'mute' themselves when not speaking in order to avoid any background noise or feedback when other participants were speaking, and if a participant wished to speak if they could put their hand up (to be seen on screen) or use the 'raise hand' function.

Members were asked to ensure that all debate was raised verbally and not via the 'chat' function for the sake of the recording. The 'chat' function could be used to highlight any technical issues and/or to get the attention of the Chair or Democratic Services Officer.

The Leader informed Cabinet of the Council's success at the Wales Veterans Awards which took place on the previous evening where the Authority won a bronze award in the Employer of the Year category. Further congratulations were offered to Barry veterans John Edwards and Jeff Rees, who were finalists in the Volunteer of the Year award, with John being awarded a bronze award in that category.

### **C37 MINUTES –**

RESOLVED – T H A T the minutes of the meeting held on 22nd June, 2023 be approved as correct record.

### **C38 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST –**

No declarations of interest were received.

**C39 ANNUAL INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT 2022/23 (REF) –**

The reference from Governance and Audit Committee of 12th June, 2023 was presented.

The Leader said there had been interesting and in-depth discussions at the Committee meeting including direction of travel, follow up audits, with the main debate concerning the no assurance opinion in respect of Stanwell School.

Councillor Birch said that the Audit team had gone into Stanwell School in March to assess the accounts as the School had been unable to meet its financial obligations. That resulted in the no assurance report that meant that immediate action was required to effectively manage fundamental gaps, weaknesses or non-compliance identified the system of governance, risk management and control was inadequate to effectively manage risks. Some of the key issues identified were:-

- The Local Authority's financial and contract procedure rules were not adhered to by the School, which was in breach of the Fair Funding Scheme; with the School believing that being a Foundation School placed them outside of such regulations which was incorrect.
- No formal agreement was in place with the contractor in relation to a capital project which incurred significant overspend which had not been identified and had not been reported to the Governing Body prior to the review.
- Grants had been included in the budget that were not confirmed to be due to be received.
- No evidence was identified of active measures being undertaken as soon as the overspend was identified and key decisions that were made were not explicit within the minutes of the Governing Body.

As a Foundation School Stanwell had been responsible for its own accounts for 30 years. The Authority's concern was that the spending of public money needed to be fully accountable, and it was disappointing that major financial decisions were made without proper reference to the Board of Governors, both in making the decisions and reporting them afterwards. The Authority's Finance Team now has oversight of the accounts and plans have been put in place to address the deficit.

Councillor Birch said that she was pleased to report that there had been no impact on the education of the children at the School and the Authority would make sure that all aspects of the School were satisfactory and staff, students and parents confident in all aspects of the School experience. The report from Internal Audit produced a series of detailed recommendations for action which were outlined in the report. Regular updates were to be received by the Governance and Audit Committee and referred on to Cabinet as part of the assistance that the Vale of Glamorgan Council was offering to Stanwell School.

The consultation process concerning the return of the School to Local Authority governance would begin on 11th September.

The Leader and Cabinet passed on their thanks to the Finance team that had acted so quickly and decisively on the issue and gave the Authority's commitment of support to the parents and children of the School to ensure that that School was financially sustainable and that the children of that School would suffer no detriment going forward.

Having considered the reference, it was subsequently

RESOLVED –

(1) T H A T the comments of the Governance and Audit Committee of 12th June, 2023 be noted.

(2) T H A T the Authority was committed to provide support to the parents and children of Stanwell School to ensure that that School was financially sustainable and that the children of the School would suffer no detriment going forward.

Reasons for decisions

(1-2) Having regard to the contents of the reference and discussions at the meeting.

**C40 GLAMORGAN HERITAGE COAST ADVISORY GROUP –**

The minutes of the Glamorgan Heritage Coast Advisory Group held on 14th April, 2023 as contained within the agenda, were submitted.

Discussion at the meeting included school visits, habitat work and maintenance of meadow land, poor internet access for car park payments, the current tourism industry across the Vale of Glamorgan and that the Heritage Coast would celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2025.

RESOLVED – T H A T the minutes of the Glamorgan Heritage Coast Advisory Group held on 14th April, 2023 be noted.

Reason for decision

In noting the minutes.

**C41 VALE OF GLAMORGAN LOCAL ACCESS FORUM –**

The minutes of the Vale of Glamorgan Local Access Forum held on 26th April, 2023 as contained within the agenda, were submitted.

Discussion at the meeting included solar farm development in the Vale of Glamorgan, impacts on rights of way and progress in terms of and increasing accessibility where footpaths had been renewed and stiles and kissing gates

installed for greater levels of accessibility.

RESOLVED – T H A T the minutes of the Vale of Glamorgan Local Access Forum meeting held on 26th April, 2023 be noted.

Reason for decision

In noting the minutes.

**C42 CABINET QUARTERLY WORK PROGRAMME - APRIL TO JUNE 2023 AND JULY TO SEPTEMBER 2023 (EL/PR) (SCRUTINY – ALL) –**

The Leader presented the report, the purpose of which was to involve, engage and consult Members of the progress to date in respect of Cabinet Quarterly Work Programmes for the period April to June 2023 and to confirm the Quarterly Work Programme for July to September 2023.

This was a matter for Executive decision.

Cabinet, having considered the report and all the issues and implications contained therein

RESOLVED –

(1) T H A T the updates to the Cabinet Quarterly Work Programme for April to June 2023 attached at Appendix 1 be agreed.

(2) T H A T the Cabinet Quarterly Work Programme July to September 2023 attached at Appendix 2 be endorsed.

Reasons for decisions

(1) To monitor progress.

(2) To approve the Work Programme for July to September 2023.

**C43 CLOSURE OF ACCOUNTS 2022/23 (EL/PR) (SCRUTINY – CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES) –**

The Leader presented the report, the purpose of which was to inform Cabinet of the provisional financial position of the Council for the 2022/23 financial year.

There had been significant inflationary and demand pressures during the year for Childrens Services including legal costs for complex cases and placement costs, supply of HGV drivers, rising fuel and school transport costs, additional pay pressures and rising energy costs. Additional payments in Social Care were made to social care providers to assist commissioning and recruitment and retention of providers.

Some provision was made for additional Council Tax income of £1.5m earlier in the year which was not achieved in full as arrears had increased but was able to be offset by underspend elsewhere. Additional pay costs had been offset by vacant posts in service budgets, however it was important to be mindful that vacant posts put additional pressure on existing staff.

The Leader referred to a typographical error in paragraph 10.5 of the report that referred to the 2020/21 the Statement of Accounts, which should have referred to the 2022/23 accounts, which was noted.

This was a matter for Executive decision.

Cabinet, having considered the report and all the issues and implications contained therein

RESOLVED –

(1) T H A T the report and the financial measures taken and proposed be approved.

(2) T H A T the allocation of overall Council surplus as set out below be approved.

- £200k transfer to Education Pressures and Improvements Reserve to provide additional support to schools in special measures.
- £850k to Education Pressures and Improvements Reserve support ALN support in mainstream schools.
- £20k to Neighbourhood Services Reserve for repairs in to single use sports facilities
- £350k to Neighbourhood Services Reserve for micro asphalt schemes to address the condition of roads within the Council area.
- £150k to Neighbourhood Services Reserve to support the delivery of health and safety works in leisure centres.
- £200k to Reshaping Risk and Investment Reserve to provide additional support to Children and Young people over the summer period.
- £120k to Neighbourhood Services Reserve to support the implementation of A48 Scheme to improve Road Safety.

(3) T H A T the report be referred to Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee.

#### Reasons for decisions

(1) To approve the report and the financial measures taken and proposed.

(2) To approve the allocation of the 2022/23 surplus to support the delivery of schemes supporting key priorities identified by the Council.

- (3) To enable the Scrutiny Committee responsible for finance to review the year end position.

#### **C44 CAPITAL CLOSURE OF ACCOUNTS 2022/23 (EL/PR) (SCRUTINY – ALL) –**

The Leader presented the report, the purpose of which was to inform Cabinet of the provisional financial position of the Council's Capital Programme for the 2022/23 financial year.

Delivering 98% of the programme before the end of the financial year had been outstanding and due to the commitment and hard work across all directorates. The Leader said it was important to recognise the work undertaken to deliver the capital programme, not only the impact of the continued school building programme but with work going on to maintain, renovate and update existing Council properties.

Councillor Wilson concurred with the Leader's comments concerning the teams that had worked so hard to deliver the capital programme, often under difficult circumstances. He referred to the successful delivery of the Resource Recovery Facility and that it was a delight to see it delivered and working.

Councillor John said that the development at Hayes Road that consisted of 19 four-person two-bedroom houses and 4 five person three-bedroom houses was extremely good news with further schemes in the pipeline which would make a difference to people across the Vale.

The Leader also referred to the installation of automatic water meter readers which gave advanced warning of water leaks on the estate which saved water and money. Paragraph 2.12 of the report noted the progress made within the Band B Programme for six of the schools in the Vale with more to come in Cowbridge, St Nicholas, Ysgol y Deri 2, Iolo Morgannwg and St Richard Gwyn from September onwards.

This was a matter for Executive decision.

Cabinet, having considered the report and all the issues and implications contained therein

#### **RESOLVED –**

- (1) T H A T the year end capital position for financial year 2022/23 be noted.
- (2) T H A T the additional scheme budgets as set out in Appendix 1 be approved.
- (3) T H A T the summary position of the changes in the Capital Programme by directorate from approval at Council on 7th March, 2022 to 31st March, 2023, as set out in Appendix 2 be noted.
- (4) T H A T the Emergency Power approved in respect of the slippage as set out in Appendix 3 be noted.

(5) T H A T the report be referred to Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee.

Reasons for decisions

- (1) To inform Cabinet of the year end capital position for financial year 2022/23.
- (2) To inform Cabinet of the additional schemes added to the approved programme for 2022/23.
- (3) To inform Cabinet of the changes to the Approved Capital Programme set on 7th March, 2022.
- (4) To advise Cabinet of the approved slippage in the Emergency Powers in the 2022/23 Capital Programme.
- (5) To enable the Scrutiny Committee responsible for finance to review the year end position.

**C45 ANNUAL TREASURY MANAGEMENT REPORT 2022/23 (EL/PR)  
(SCRUTINY – CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES) –**

The Leader presented the report, the purpose of which was to present the annual review report on Treasury Management 2022/23.

This was a matter for Executive decision.

Cabinet, having considered the report and all the issues and implications contained therein

RESOLVED – T H A T the annual report on Treasury Management 2022/23 and that the report be referred to the Corporate Performance Resources Scrutiny Committee prior to being referred to Full Council for approval.

Reason for decision

To accept and refer the report to Council.

**C46 CORPORATE RESOURCES DIRECTORATE - CAPACITY & WAYS  
OF WORKING (EL/PR) (SCRUTINY – CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND  
RESOURCES) –**

The Leader presented the report, the purpose of which was to provide an update on proposals to make changes within the Corporate Resources directorate following the restructure of the Strategic Leadership Team in 2022 and reflecting the future ways of working to support the Council.

Paragraph 2.5 of the report highlighted that the Authority had been operating without a Head of Policy and Business Transformation or Operational Manager for Performance and Policy which had put pressure on other staff and was not a sustainable situation. Paragraph 2.8 of the report proposed reorganising the directorate around four key service areas of HR & Organisational Development, Legal & Democratic Services, Finance & Digital and had no financial implications to the Authority.

Councillor Sivagnanam stressed the importance of the Vale's participation and engagement and equality strategies and that there was no cost implication for the Authority.

This was a matter for Executive decision.

Cabinet, having considered the report and all the issues and implications contained therein

RESOLVED –

- (1) T H A T the contents of the report be noted.
- (2) T H A T the proposals contained in the report be endorsed.

Reasons for decisions

- (1) To update Cabinet on the proposals to make changes within the Corporate Resources directorate.
- (2) To enable additional strategic capacity to be created to progress the Council's digital ambitions and support the Council to deliver its strategic priorities.

**C47 DRAFT DIGITAL STRATEGY (EL/PR) (SCRUTINY – CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES) –**

The Leader presented the report, the purpose of which was to provide Cabinet with an overview of work undertaken to develop a new draft Digital Strategy and seek approval to consult on the same before adoption.

Digital innovation was a step change away from where it was prior to the pandemic where many service users became much more used to accessing services online. The Strategy would address how digital technology could be used to become more effective, more active, more accessible, more inclusive, and also more data driven. There was a fear that some people would be left out because of such changes, but residents would still be supported by in-person and telephone services.

Councillor Sivagnanam said it was important to recognise that both digital and in person support services were available, and that demand for digital services had increased, e.g., 95% of residents in the Vale of Glamorgan digitally completed the census survey. Data gathered could be used to provide better services to residents.



This was a matter for Executive decision.

Cabinet, having considered the report and all the issues and implications contained therein

RESOLVED –

- (1) T H A T the contents of this report be noted.
- (2) T H A T the draft Digital Strategy and proposals contained in the report be endorsed as the basis for wider consultation.
- (3) T H A T the report and Appendix A be referred to Corporate Performance & Resources Scrutiny Committee as part of the consultation process.
- (4) T H A T Cabinet receives a further report on conclusion of the consultation process in order to consider a final Digital Strategy to be adopted.

Reasons for decisions

- (1) To update Cabinet on the approach taken to developing the draft Digital Strategy.
- (2) To enable the draft Digital Strategy to be consulted upon.
- (3) To enable the Corporate Performance & Resources Scrutiny Committee to participate in the consultation process.
- (4) To enable Cabinet to consider the outcomes of the consultation process and proposed changes to the draft Digital Strategy and to ensure the Council adopts a Digital Strategy to provide the framework for digital development in the future.

**C48 STRONG COMMUNITIES GRANT FUND 2020-2025 (DL/SP)  
(SCRUTINY – CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES) –**

The Deputy Leader presented the report, the purpose of which was to provide Cabinet with an update on the Strong Communities Grant Fund 2023 -24 and to seek approval for the award of funding for the fourth round of applications.

Councillor Brooks emphasised the help and support available to a variety of applying organisations and gave examples of some of the different types of applications that had been made to the Fund.

The Leader added that bringing funding together in this way had enabled different organisations from across the Vale of Glamorgan to apply for support for a variety of different reasons and had proven to be amazingly successful. The Creative Communities team had developed a high level of expertise in helping organisations out together effective applications but also assisting with monitoring expenditure.

This was a matter for Executive decision.

Cabinet, having considered the report and all the issues and implications contained therein

RESOLVED –

- (1) T H A T grant funding of up to £152,916.58 be approved and the Evaluation Panel's recommendations as outlined in Appendix A be endorsed.
- (2) T H A T the content of the report and Appendices B and C be noted.

Reasons for decisions

- (1) To enable Strong Communities Grant Funding to be awarded to submissions as outlined in Appendix A attached to the report, in line with the Council's Constitution and the scope of the scheme.
- (2) To provide Cabinet with an update on the Strong Communities Grant Fund.

**C49 WELSH LANGUAGE STANDARDS ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2022-23 (EAWL) (SCRUTINY – LEARNING AND CULTURE AND CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES) –**

The Cabinet Member presented the report, the purpose of which was to seek approval for the Council's Annual Welsh Monitoring Report and update on 5-year Promotion Strategy.

Councillor Birch listed matters already in place bilingually including the website that was available and updated bilingually and would soon include historical pages also, staff pages enabled staff to view their information on internal news, policies, payslips etc., the Chief Executive posted a weekly message to staff bilingually, Communications teams produce material bilingually and the Contact Centre and Reception at the Civic Offices were able to conduct business in either medium of English or Welsh. Recruitment and retention of Welsh speakers was a priority and Welsh language courses for all levels offered during work time and at no cost to staff, with classes held remotely including members of the community. Welsh awareness training had also been made available for elected Members as part of equalities training.

The Leader noted that the Report Owner listed on the report was incorrect, stated as the Executive Leader and Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources when it should have been the Cabinet Member for Education, Arts and the Welsh Language.

This was a matter for Executive decision.

Cabinet, having considered the report and all the issues and implications contained therein

RESOLVED –

(1) T H A T the Annual Welsh Monitoring Report for 2022-23 (Appendix 1) and Update on the Welsh Language Promotional Strategy (Appendix 2) be approved in principle, subject to consideration by Scrutiny Committee (Learning & Culture and Corporate Performance & Resources).

(2) T H A T the report and appendices be referred to Learning & Culture and Corporate Performance & Resources Scrutiny Committees for consideration and if endorsed by the Committees, that the report be published.

Reasons for decisions

(1) To allow the Council to meet its reporting duty to the Welsh Commissioner as part of the Welsh Language Standards.

(2) To enable Learning & Culture and Corporate Performance & Resources Scrutiny Committees to consider the report (and appendices) prior to publication.

**C50 DAMP AND MOULD POLICY (NBS) (SCRUTINY – HOMES AND SAFE COMMUNITIES) –**

The Cabinet Member presented the report, the purpose of which was to approve the Damp and Mould Condensation Policy. Councillor Wilson said there were management arrangements in place for addressing condensation and damp issues in residential properties, but the Policy consolidated the detail into a working document for stakeholders, including residents, Officers and the general public, who may be concerned or interested in damp and condensation issues within their properties. He emphasised that Officers in the Housing Department or Neighbourhood Services Department could help people if there were issues with damp and mould.

This was a matter for Executive decision.

Cabinet, having considered the report and all the issues and implications contained therein

RESOLVED – T H A T the Damp and Mould Policy provided at Appendix 1 be approved.

Reason for decision

To enable the practices set out within the policy to be adopted and practiced.

**C51 PROPOSED TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER FOR EXCEPTIONS TO WALES 20MPH DEFAULT SPEED LIMIT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF ANCILLARY SPEED LIMITS (NBS) (SCRUTINY – ENVIRONMENT AND REGENERATION) –**

The Cabinet Member presented the report, the purpose of which was to update Cabinet on the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) process associated with proposed exceptions to Wales 20mph Default Speed Limit and proposed ancillary speed limits.

Councillor Wilson said that a similar exercise had taken place in Spain where a substantial decrease in the number of deaths and serious accidents had occurred because of the lowering of the speed limit. It was also hoped that the speed reduction would help to promote sustainable mobility and encourage active travel options and therefore in the future potentially assist to reduce the number of journeys by private car.

Councillor John encouraged people to take part in the consultation to express their views.

The Leader said the consultation was an example of data driving actions and echoed Councillor John's encouragement of people taking part in the consultation to express their views. She said that speed reductions would make it safer for pedestrians and cyclists, near schools and would not add a lot of time to average journeys around the Vale of Glamorgan.

This was a matter for Executive decision.

Cabinet, having considered the report and all the issues and implications contained therein

**RESOLVED –**

(1) T H A T the public consultation for the proposed Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) associated with exceptions to Wales 20mph Default Speed Limit and proposed ancillary speed limits which commenced on 22nd June, 2023 be noted.

(2) T H A T the report be referred to the Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee for consideration.

(3) T H A T Cabinet be provided with a further report on this matter to consider the responses and comments received during the public consultation period and make a final decision on the implementation of the proposed TRO.

**Reasons for decisions**

(1) To advise Cabinet of the proposed TRO and public consultation process.

(2) To ensure that the views of the Scrutiny Committee are considered prior to a future decision being taken by Cabinet on the proposed TRO.

- (3) To confirm the Council's position in respect of any objections that may be made to the Order.

**C52 VALE, VALLEYS & CARDIFF ADOPTION COLLABORATIVE AGREEMENT (SCH) (SCRUTINY – HEALTHY LIVING AND SOCIAL CARE) –**

The Cabinet Member presented the report, the purpose of which was to agree to enter into a new Collaborative Agreement, a copy of which was appended to the report, between Vale of Glamorgan Council, The County Council of the City and County of Cardiff, Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council and Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council.

This was a matter for Executive decision.

Cabinet, having considered the report and all the issues and implications contained therein

RESOLVED –

- (1) T H A T a new Collaborative Agreement be entered into between the Vale of Glamorgan Council, the County Council of the City and County of Cardiff, Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council and Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council to commence on 1st June, 2023.
- (2) T H A T authority be delegated to the Monitoring Officer/Head of Legal and Democratic Services to agree and execute the Collaborative Agreement and future variations to the Agreement.

Reasons for decisions

- (1) To provide a governance framework which ensured the continued operation and delivery of the Collaborative and outlined the responsibilities of partners.
- (2) To bring the Collaborative arrangements into line with current practice and requirements.