

CABINET

Minutes of a Remote meeting held on 20th 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, E. Williams and M.R. Wilson.

Also Present: Councillors E. Goodjohn, Dr. I.J. Johnson and N.C. Thomas.

C53 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.

C54 APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE –

This was noted from Councillor R. Sivagnanam.

C55 MINUTES –

RESOLVED – T H A T the minutes of the meeting held on 6th July, 2023 be approved as correct record.

C56 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST –

No declarations of interest were received.

C57 PEOPLE STRATEGY AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS (REF) –

The reference from Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee on 26th April, 2023 was presented and considered alongside the report listed on the meeting agenda under Item 15.

Discussion topics at the meeting were queries regarding measuring of staff performance, hybrid working and carbon impact, staff flexibility (via hybrid working), engagement with the Youth Service and comparative staff data.

Having considered the reference, it was subsequently

RESOLVED – T H A T the contents of the reference be noted and considered alongside the report listed on the meeting agenda under Item 15.

Reasons for decisions

Having regard to the contents of the reference and discussions at the meeting and consideration alongside the report listed on the meeting agenda under Item 15.

C58 AUDIT WALES – VALE OF GLAMORGAN OUTLINE AUDIT PLAN 2023 (REF) –

The reference from Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee on 24th May, 2023 was presented.

The Leader said that both the Corporate Performance and Resources and Governance and Audit Committees had gone through the plan in detail and were both completely happy with the outcomes. There was an assurance that there was an option to explore further areas across the range of audits planned for the current year and that there could be more on-site work if needed.

Having considered the reference, it was subsequently

RESOLVED – T H A T the Audit Wales Outline Audit Plan 2023 for the Vale of Glamorgan Council be endorsed and approved.

Reasons for decisions

Having regard to the contents of the reference and discussions at the meeting.

C59 VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL – THE APPLICATION OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLE IN SERVICE AREAS (REF) –

The reference from Governance and Audit Committee on 12th June, 2023 was presented and the Leader referred to the two Recommendations made by the Committee in the reference:-

R1: The Council should develop its project management toolkit to ensure that those documents helped officers to apply the Sustainable Development Principle from the outset.

R2: The Council should develop its learning and development offer to help to ensure that staff across the organisation understood the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 and were able to apply the Sustainable Development Principle as needed in their roles.

Having considered the reference, it was subsequently

RESOLVED – T H A T Cabinet approved the two Recommendations made by the Governance and Audit Committee on 12th June, 2023 along with the Action Plan, attached at Appendix B to the report.

Reasons for decisions

Having regard to the contents of the reference and discussions at the meeting.

C60 VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL: ANNUAL PERFORMANCE CALENDAR 2023/24 (REF) –

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

The recommendation for Cabinet from the Governance and Audit Committee reference was:-

(2) T H A T Cabinet be advised of views of Members of the Governance and Audit Committee, those being:

- For consideration to be given to extending the public engagement activity scheduled for August 2023 as many people will be on holiday and because of the school summer term.
- That the Council ensures that members of the public feel that their views have been heard and responses provided to indicate how those views have been taken into account.

The Leader said that the Council very much took those recommendations on board and that consideration would be given to ensure that people had sufficient time for their views to be heard and fully considered.

Having considered the reference, it was subsequently

RESOLVED – T H A T Cabinet endorsed the recommendation from the Governance and Audit Committee on 12th June, 2023.

Reasons for decisions

Having regard to the contents of the reference and discussions at the meeting.

C61 Q4 UPDATED: AUDIT WALES WORK PROGRAMME TIMETABLE 2022/23 – VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL (REF) –

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

Committee had been advised that climate change was one of the key priority areas for Audit Wales and some initial work had actually already been carried out, with further review work expected. The Council would continue to work closely with Audit Wales in terms of our Project Zero ambitions.

Having considered the reference, it was subsequently

RESOLVED – T H A T the contents of the reference be noted.

Reasons for decisions

Having regard to the contents of the reference and discussions at the meeting.

C62 PROJECT ZERO UPDATE REPORT (REF) –

The reference from Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee on 20th June, 2023 was presented and linked to agenda Item 10 in the meeting agenda as a reference from Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee on the same topic.

The Leader said that there were comments from both Environment and Regeneration and Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committees who received information as part of the six monthly update that goes to both Committees.

Topics discussed included the new Project Zero online hub, planting and support for biodiversity, waste management changes, Place Making planning, adoption of the new Procurement Policy and Strategy, and work on the future Carbon Management Plan, as well as performance indicators that had been adopted under Project Zero. Further discussion centred on available finances and reserves, environmental impacts from developments, public transport and bus routes.

Having considered the reference in association with agenda Item 10, it was subsequently

RESOLVED – T H A T Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee be thanked for their consideration of the matter and the contents of the reference be noted.

Reasons for decisions

Having regard to the contents of the reference and discussions at the meeting.

C63 PROJECT ZERO UPDATE REPORT (REF) –

The reference from Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee on 21st June, 2023 was presented and linked to agenda Item 9 in the meeting agenda as a reference from Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee on the same topic.

Topics discussed included the new transport interchange, queries around the impact of changes to recycling and available data, carbon footprint reduction as a result of staff working from home and circular economy principles.

Having considered the reference in association with agenda Item 9, it was subsequently

RESOLVED – T H A T Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee be thanked for their consideration of the matter the contents of the reference be noted.

Reasons for decisions

Having regard to the contents of the reference and discussions at the meeting.

C64 REVISED MULTI-LOCATION MEETINGS POLICY (REF) –

The Leader advised that the expected reference from Democratic Services Committee on 17th July, 2023 which was due to be presented at the meeting would now be deferred to the September cycle of meetings. There was a tremendous amount of discussion at that Committee with a number of recommendations being sent forward that required full consideration of all the implications before Cabinet could take a final decision.

Therefore, it was subsequently

RESOLVED – T H A T the reference from Democratic Services Committee on 17th July, 2023 would now be presented to Cabinet in September 2023.

Reasons for decisions

In order to consider the reference having given due regard to the discussions that took place at Democratic Services Committee on 17th July, 2023.

C65 JOINT CONSULTATIVE FORUM –

The minutes of the Joint Consultative Forum held on 24th April, 2023 as contained within the agenda, were submitted.

The Leader noted that one of the items discussed was the People Strategy and Supporting Documents matter on the agenda for the meeting under Items 4 and 15 where there had been widespread support for the Strategy and its supporting documents.

RESOLVED – T H A T the minutes of the Joint Consultative Forum held on 24th April, 2023 be noted.

Reason for decision

In noting the minutes.

C66 CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL –

The minutes of the Corporate Parenting Panel held on 15th May, 2023 as contained within the agenda, were submitted.

Councillor Williams who Chairs the Panel referred to its Agenda Item 4 as an interesting project that looked at developments on how to improve the experiences of our Children Looked After (CLA) in schools. The inquiry brought together information that had previously been difficult to get hold of and enabled better working links between the Education and Social Care directorate. It was recognised that CLA did experience trauma, and some had additional support needs, but there was recognition that the teachers themselves were trained and able to recognise the children's needs and could understand better how to support vulnerable children within the schools. Councillor Williams thanked the presenting Officer and representative from Llantwit Major School for their presentation.

RESOLVED – T H A T the minutes of the Corporate Parenting Panel meeting held on 15th May, 2023 be noted.

Reason for decision

In noting the minutes.

C67 USE OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S EMERGENCY POWERS (EL/PR) (SCRUTINY – ALL) –

The Leader presented the report, the purpose of which was to notify Cabinet of the exercising of Emergency Powers by the Chief Executive since the last report on 8th June, 2023.

Reference was made to emergency powers' various uses, e.g., putting in place maintenance work arrangements once tenders had already formally been agreed or accepting grants from outside organisations so that the Council could begin to deliver the work that was associated with those grants in a timely manner. School maintenance was a typical example during the summer period as maintenance was often programmed while the pupils were on summer holidays.

Councillor John referred to Tennis Court Management at Penarth Athletic Field on Page 5 of the report as continuing the excellent support the Council had received and collaboration with Tennis Wales following on from Romilly Park last year, with four more courts also planned.

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 use of the Chief Executive's Emergency Powers be noted.

Reasons for decisions

To inform Cabinet.

C68 PEOPLE STRATEGY AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS (EL/PR) (SCRUTINY – CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES) –

The Leader presented the report, the purpose of which was to enable Cabinet to consider the revised People Strategy and supporting documents post consultation and was considered alongside the reference listed on the meeting agenda under Item 4.

Councillor Williams noted the impacts the report had on both staff and residents of the Vale of Glamorgan in terms of service delivery and covered key areas right across the Council. He was also pleased, as the Armed Forces Champion, to see the Armed Forces Covenant embedded in the documentation and commended all the staff that had worked to put forward the report for consideration.

The Leader echoed Councillor Williams' comments concerning staff and added that the Council tried to be as enabling, flexible and supportive to staff whilst ensuring that service delivery and business needs were met.

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 content of the updated People Strategy (Appendix 1) and supporting documents (Appendices 2, 3, 4 and 5) in addition to the consultation feedback (Appendix 6) be noted.
- (2) T H A T the revised People Strategy and supporting documents be endorsed and approved following consultation as described in the report and appendices.
- (3) T H A T an update on the progress made as part of the quarterly performance reports and in standalone reports as necessary be received by Cabinet.
- (4) T H A T the Strategy be reviewed regularly, and delegated authority be given to the Head of Human Resources and Organisation Development in consultation with Leader and Director of Corporate Resources to make any required updates, with material changes reported to Cabinet.
- (5) T H A T the Volunteering Policy attached at Appendix 4 to the report be referred to the Voluntary Sector Joint Liaison Committee for their information and to discuss the potential opportunities to work collaboratively on the scheme.

Reasons for decisions

- (1) To enable Cabinet to consider the consultation feedback and subsequent changes.
- (2) To inform Cabinet's consideration of a final version of People Strategy and supported documents and ensure the Council has an approved Strategy.
- (3) To enable Cabinet to review and consider progress made against the People Strategy as stated in the Workforce Implementation Plan.
- (4) To enable adaptations to be made, to be fleet of foot to any changing economic dynamics and the needs of our citizens and workforce.
- (5) To enable the Committee to consider the policy and how the Council and third sector can work collaboratively on the scheme.

C69 FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2024/25 (EL/PR) (SCRUTINY – CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES) –

The Leader presented the report, the purpose of which was to review the financial pressures over the medium term and put in place a strategy for delivering the 2024/25 budget and sustainable finances over the medium term.

The Leader said that the Council would continue to work to ensure that services were maintained for the most vulnerable. Inflation had been a major issue faced by the Authority over recent months, along with pay awards, energy and transport costs which had had an effect on the UK as a whole. The report would go through the

review processes as laid out in the Executive Summary to the report and the Leader said she looked forward to the associated discussions and outcomes from the various Scrutiny Committees as part of that process.

Councillor John thanked Finance staff for the report which laid out the challenges ahead and those thanks were echoed by Cabinet.

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 challenging financial position faced by the Council with a funding gap of £6.430M in 2024/25 and £11.953M across the medium term be noted.

(2) T H A T Cabinet lobby Welsh Government for an appropriate settlement in the face of the continued inflationary pressures being experienced and to authorise Council Officers to do the same through appropriate networks.

(3) T H A T officers be requested to review the cost pressures and bring back savings proposals to address the budget gap in order for the Council to be in a position to set a balanced budget in March 2024.

(4) T H A T officers be requested to develop proposals for a redefined transformation programme, the Reshaping Programme, to complement the Financial Strategy and contribute to the medium-term financial sustainability of the Council.

(5) T H A T the report be referred to all of the Council's Scrutiny Committees and for Committees to review the Financial Strategy (including the proposed approach to defining and developing the next iteration of the Reshaping Programme) and assumptions made on costs and funding in the Medium Term Financial Plan refresh and for comments to be referred back to Cabinet for consideration.

(6) T H A T a further report on the Council's budget be presented to Cabinet in due course as outlined in this report.

Reasons for decisions

(1) There continued to be significant financial pressures impacting on the 2024/25 Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan 2024/25 to 2028/29 and it was essential to inform Cabinet of the magnitude of the challenge and for work to commence as early as possible on establishing a balanced budget and sustainable financial position in the medium term.

(2) The challenges could not be overstated at this time and many of the cost pressures could not be mitigated, the best possible settlement would be essential if there were not to be reductions in service provision.

- (3) There were a number of strategies to balancing the budget other than attracting more funding and delivering savings. Costs needed to be managed also.
- (4) To enable the medium-term financial sustainability of the Council to be strengthened by a new iteration of the Reshaping Programme.
- (5) The Council was open to clear and transparent financial reporting and an appropriate level of challenge to the management of its finances. A key element of the challenge process was through the Council's scrutiny function.
- (6) The budget setting was a lengthy process and it was important to bring regular updates back to Members.

C70 DRAFT CAPITAL STRATEGY 2024/25 AND INITIAL CAPITAL PROGRAMME PROPOSALS 2024/25 TO 2028/29 (EL/PR) (SCRUTINY – CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES) –

The Leader presented the report, the purpose of which was to gain approval for the Initial Capital Programme Proposals for 2024/25 to 2028/29 so that they may be submitted to Scrutiny Committees for consultation and to set out the Draft Capital Strategy for Cabinet Members to consider.

Predicting capital resources over a long term period was difficult as the level of general capital funding provided by Welsh Government was usually advised on a year by year basis, grant levels were subject to change and capital receipts difficult to predict.

On 28th February, 2023, the Welsh Government announced the Final 2023/24 General Capital funding settlement which was £6.997M, being made up of £3.545M grant and £3.452M of supported borrowing. This was an increase of £1.168M from the 2022/23 funding of £5.829M. General capital funding for local government for 2023-24 was confirmed at £180m and would remain at £180m for 2024-25, with no further projections beyond this point currently available.

Councillor Wilson said that capital investment within his Cabinet Portfolio was crucial and often on an invest to save basis and thanked the staff and all concerned that had worked to put forward the report for consideration.

The Leader said the report had gone through a great deal of internal discussion, so all concerned understood the background to the proposals and be open and transparent in the justification for the decisions taken.

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 Draft Capital Strategy 2024/25 as set out in Appendix 1 be approved.
- (2) T H A T the Initial Capital Programme for 2024/25 to 2028/29 be noted by Cabinet and referred to Scrutiny Committees for consultation.
- (3) T H A T the Non Treasury Investment Strategy scheme be included as a Pipeline scheme within the 2024/25 to 2028/29 Capital Programme with a budget of £12M as detailed in the report.

Reasons for decisions

- (1) To approve the Draft Capital Strategy for 2024/25.
- (2) In order for Members to be appraised of the initial status of the Capital Programme for 2024/25 to 2028/29.
- (3) In order that the Council's Non Treasury Investment Strategy can progress.

C71 CONSULTATION ON PROPOSAL TO DELIVER A NEW BUILDING FOR ST RICHARD GWYN CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL (EAWL) (SCRUTINY – LEARNING AND CULTURE) –

The Cabinet Member presented the report, the purpose of which was to advise Cabinet of the consultation on a proposal to deliver a new building for St Richard Gwyn Catholic High School on its existing site from September 2025.

Councillor Birch made the point that there would be climate change and nature implications here, but that new build elements of the Sustainable Communities for Learning rolling programme would meet the Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) excellent rating for significantly reducing the running costs and the carbon emissions arising from the building which was an ambition of the Council.

The Leader said that there was much excitement in the school that the proposal would be moving forward for consultation and looked forward to receiving the results of the consultation in October.

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 Governing Body's decision to undertake a period of consultation from 5th September, 2023 to 17th October, 2023 on the proposal to

make a regulated alteration to their school to increase the capacity of St Richard Gwyn Catholic High School from 813 places to 1,050 places from September 2025 be endorsed.

(2) T H A T implementation of the proposal would be subject to the relevant statutory processes and that Welsh Government capital funding would be subject to approval of a rigorous business case.

(3) T H A T the report be referred to the Learning and Culture Scrutiny Committee for consideration as part of the proposed consultation exercise.

Reasons for decisions

(1) To note the Governing Body's decision to seek feedback through a formal consultation with prescribed stakeholders, prior to any publication of its proposal, as required by the Schools Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the School Organisation Code 2018.

(2) To note that implementation of the proposal would be subject to the relevant statutory processes and that Welsh Government capital funding would be subject to approval of a rigorous business case.

(3) To ensure that the Learning and Culture Scrutiny Committee be consulted on the proposal.

C72 REVISED HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE THREE YEAR PLAN 2022 – 2024 (NBS) (SCRUTINY – ENVIRONMENT AND REGENERATION) –

The Cabinet Member presented the report, the purpose of which was to update Cabinet of the budget pressures impacting on the Three Year Resurfacing Plan and to agree the priority locations for resurfacing works for 2023/24.

Councillor Wilson referred to the Complete Appendix A which was attached to the report which comprised a spreadsheet of roads that had been and were due to be resurfaced, as well as the scoring system used as referenced in Appendix B. He assured Cabinet that there were objective criteria in place to assess road condition, but encouraged residents and elected Members to advise the Council if there were other areas that required consideration so that resources could be prioritised appropriately.

An additional £350,000 had been secured which would be used to fund the micro asphalt treatment programme with the streets suitable for this form of treatment and in future years, the criteria for road scoring would be reviewed to better consider issues such as Active Travel and other routes that may be well used by cyclists.

The Leader thanked the staff who had maintained the roads over the past year, particularly during periods of inclement weather.

This was a matter for Executive decision.

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

- (1) T H A T the contents of the revised Highway Maintenance Three Year Resurfacing Plan 2022 to 2024 as attached at Appendix A be noted and the additional priority locations for resurfacing works be agreed in principle.
- (2) T H A T the Director of Environment and Housing be granted delegated authority to amend the Plan, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood and Building Services, if urgent highway resurfacing priorities were identified.
- (3) T H A T the matter be referred to Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee for consideration.
- (4) T H A T subject to no comments that would affect the plan as proposed being received from the Scrutiny Committee, the Highway Maintenance Three Year Resurfacing Plan 2022 to 2024 be agreed.
- (5) T H A T in future years, the criteria for road scoring be reviewed to better consider issues such as Active Travel and other routes that may be well used by cyclists.
- (6) T H A T only essential parts of a defective Highway, identified by Officers be resurfaced where necessary.

Reasons for decisions

- (1) To agree the Plan and priority locations in principle.
- (2) To deal efficiently with changes in the Plan should other highway routes deteriorate more rapidly than expected or constraints dictate that a change in priority was required to ensure the most cost-effective use of the budget allocation in 2023/24.
- (3) To ensure that the relevant Scrutiny Committee could consider the details of the Highway Resurfacing Three Year Plan (2022-2024), prior to it being formally agreed.
- (4) To enable the final Plan to be approved following its consideration by the relevant Scrutiny Committee should no comments that affect the plan as proposed be received.
- (5) To ensure that the future assessment criteria would consider all relevant highway use factors.
- (6) So that the Highway Resurfacing Budget (2022/23) be utilised as efficiently as possible.

C73 JOINT AREA PLAN (SCH) (SCRUTINY – HEALTHY LIVING AND SOCIAL CARE) –

The Cabinet Member presented the report, the purpose of which was to seek approval of the Joint Area Plan.

Councillor Williams advised that the Joint Area Plan had been considered by Healthy Living and Social Care Scrutiny Committee on 13th June, 2023 and the Plan amended accordingly.

The Leader was pleased to see the report come forward for consideration as it gave those affected a voice and would make a big difference to people's ability to access support.

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 considerations of the Joint Area Plan by the Healthy Living and Social Care Scrutiny Committee be noted.

(2) T H A T the Joint Area Plan as appended to the Report be approved.

Reasons for decisions

(1) To ensure that Cabinet Members had oversight of the feedback from Members of the Healthy Living and Social Care Scrutiny Committee.

(2) To ensure that the Vale of Glamorgan Council approved the commitments in the Plan and fulfilled its obligations under Section 14A of the Social Services and Wellbeing Act (Wales) 2014.